

# **Social Entrepreneurship and Economic Revitalization in Chendamangalam with Chekutty Dolls**

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**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ECONOMICS**



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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project titled "Social Entrepreneurship and Economic Revitalization in Chendamangalam with Chekutty Dolls" submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Bachelors of Arts in Economics to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) (Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam) is a bonafide record of the work done by the project group under my supervision and guidance.

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## DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the project "Social Entrepreneurship and Economic Revitalization in Chendamangalam with Chekutty Dolls" submitted by us for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics is our original work.



Signature of the Supervisor

Dr. Pearly Antony O

Signature of candidates

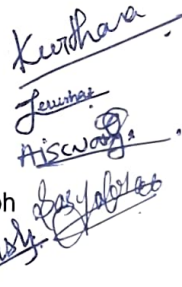
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## **CHAPTER -1**

### **Social Entrepreneurship and Economic Revitalization in Chendamangalam with Chekutty Dolls**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The term "Cherine Athijeevicha Kuttu" signifies "child who survived the mud" thus producing Chekkuttu as a symbol of brave spirit that represents Kerala.

The year 2018 brought catastrophic floods to Kerala which eliminated everything familiar and dear to the people. The historic weaving village of Chendamangalam in Kerala suffered its raw materials and woven sarees to become drowned by mud and floodwater.

The entire weaving community faced complete destruction because they lost their life- saving prospects together with their entire income. Social entrepreneurs Lakshmi Menon and Gopinath Parayil established the 'Chekkuttu' doll production during this time using no longer usable sarees as their material. The creation of 360 Chekkuttu dolls requires just one saree. Each single saree cost Rs 1300 when purchased by customers. The artisans produced 360 dolls using one wrapped saree wherein each doll was priced at Rs 25 while the entire value grew to Rs 9000. All profits from the doll business benefited the Chendamangalam handloom weaver's cooperative society. These dolls show both regional strength and new beginnings in a breathtaking manner.

Chekkuttu became the decisive symbol of hope. Knitters in the community utilize damaged fabrics to create attractive dolls as part of their recycling practices. The artwork creates complex visual splendor to produce its completed forms. These dolls operate as incredible symbols of commitment to renewal along with embodying the national love. These dolls restore the essence of Kerala which people wear on their shoulder bags and backpacks and decorate their automobiles.

This research evaluates how much these dolls have supported the complete Chendamangalam population as they rebuilt both their social infrastructure and financial systems.

## **1.2 Review of Literature**

According to (Dr. Anu Varghese, 2019) the Handloom and Khadi sectors of Kerala maintain significance as essential parts of the textile industry because they use hand- crafted and environmentally friendly production methods. The current issue arises from their marketing methods because they need stronger approaches to boost customer satisfaction while also building loyalty with consumers. Price affordability together with product location features demonstrate weak effects regarding customer loyalty development. Customers repurchase and spread positive word-of-mouth about products during promotional events when promotion techniques prove successful. Authentication of products must include emphasis on dual characteristics: traditional values alongside societal acceptance. The success of Kerala handlooms and khadi needs improvements in their marketing structures along with their brand representation methods.

(AD Mohapatra and Shruti Sudha Mishra, 2020) completed a review of Handloom Sustainability explaining that the surge of global textile industry competition weakened the handloom industry and damaged traditional weaver economic stability. Many weavers now face unemployment and underemployment which triggered several societies and production units to close down. Trust me that Handloom keeps its market dominance because of its deep cultural heritage and visual appeal.

Traditions and beauty guide handloom textile products but robust market competition requires ways for handlooms to continue existing. To develop sustainable handloom practices, one should focus on customers while building marketing skills and implementing marketing information systems and establishing common facility centers for storage and distribution and securing low-cost raw materials in a timely manner with regulated price systems to bridge skill gaps and secure the correct participation of all stakeholders and create a professional environment with additional training needs.

(Vivek Kumar, Pratishtha Kumari, Pooja Yadav and Madan Kumar ,2021) illustrates the saga of Indian handloom sector, how handlooms advanced alongside historical civilizations as revealed by scriptural and archaeological evidence because it enabled this sector to absorb complex artistic and cultural values. The Indian economy expanded through foreign trade enhancement and industrial development and metropolitan growth throughout various

regions of the country as a result of this sector. The textile sector in India produced exceptional quality fabrics with cotton in addition to silk linen and muslin textiles before central Asia joined its industries with India. British officials targeted this sector until it failed to exist during the 18th and 19th centuries because they understood its critical connection to Indian industrial support systems. Indian society continued to preserve this freedom tradition during the freedom struggle despite many obstacles because it represented personal autonomy. The survival of fabrics produced from local materials combined with unique techniques depends on giving mainly female workers enough power. Sustainable growth for the industry requires better backing support and technological innovation along with expanded markets to reach its full potential of development.

(Dr. Sabiha Khatoon, 2016) describes "Make in India" as a market access tool that enables the Indian handloom sector to survive its market challenges as one of the major sectors of the Indian textiles industry. Through the "Make in India" initiative the handloom industry receives fresh opportunities to display its attractiveness combined with powerful capabilities for the global market. The plan creates opportunities to bring international customers while generating more export funds thus decreasing the country's money outflows. Private investments should be encouraged because this policy can solve the technological upgrade problem while making handloom products more appealing to buyers. Foreign investments in this sector can be assisted through tax breaks and credit incentives which enable necessary capital flow to aid in global promotion of Indian culture.

(G Naga Raju, 2012) examines the socio-economic conditions of handloom weavers in India, highlighting their struggles despite being a vital part of the country's heritage and economy. The handloom sector faces challenges like obsolete technology, unorganized production, low productivity, inadequate capital, conventional products, and weak marketing, making it a weak competitor against powerloom and mill sectors. The research finds that 59.5% of weaver households have an income of less than Rs. 5,000, and about 40% of them work as master weavers. The study emphasizes the need for support and development to improve the socio-economic conditions of handloom weavers and revitalize the industry.

(KS Suresh Kumar ,2009) studies the role of primary handloom co-operatives in Kerala and reveals that these cooperatives play a vital role in promoting the handloom industry, empowering weavers, and preserving traditional skills, despite facing challenges like inadequate infrastructure, poor marketing, and lack of financing. Research has consistently

shown the importance of co-operatives in rural development, poverty reduction, and women's empowerment, with Kerala's handloom co-operatives successfully providing employment opportunities and improving weavers' socio-economic conditions. The government's initiatives, such as the Handloom Development Programme and the National Handloom Development Corporation, have also been explored. The review highlights the need for further research to evaluate the effectiveness of primary handloom co-operatives in Kerala and identify areas for improvement, underscoring their significance in the state's handloom industry.

(M B Ajithan, 2006) observes the Impact of globalization on the Village industries in Kerala with special reference to Handloom industry in Ernakulam district. This work examines the impact of globalization on village industries in Kerala, with a specific focus on the handloom industry in Ernakulam district. The research highlights the challenges faced by the handloom industry, including stiff competition from power looms, inadequate infrastructure, financial crisis, marketing problems, limited availability of raw materials, and unavailability of skilled laborers, leading to low wage rates and even suicides among handloom weavers. Despite government initiatives and support, the industry struggles to survive, emphasizing the need for sustainable solutions to preserve this traditional craft and ensure the livelihoods of those dependent on it.

(Raju Chilusani, 2022) in his study of Impact of Globalization on Handloom Industry examines the effects of globalization on the handloom industry, highlighting the challenges and opportunities that local artisans and weavers face in the global market. The study's findings can inform strategies to support the local handloom sector, promoting sustainable livelihoods and preserving cultural heritage in the face of globalization. By connecting the study's insights to the local sector, stakeholders can work to create opportunities for artisans, enhance the industry's competitiveness, and preserve the unique cultural traditions of the handloom industry.

(Krishna Harish, 2019) observed the market visibility of Chekutty, a unique handicraft product that customers are willing to pay high prices for due to their personal preference. Chekutty can be categorized by various attributes such as price, market (domestic or export), maintenance, storage, utility, and style. Despite providing significant employment to weavers,

the Chekutty industry is in decline. To revive it, strategic collaboration among institutions is needed, along with addressing financial challenges and securing support from the government and microfinance institutions. Future research should explore why key stakeholders are not supporting Chekutty making.

Here's the corrected version:

(Ashwani T.D. and Dr. Shivashankar Bhat, 2022) highlights the problems and challenges of the handloom industry through a study conducted in the Chendamangalam Handloom Cooperative Society in Kerala. The study emphasizes the production, marketing, and financial challenges faced by the traditional handloom industry. Key issues include competition from power looms, limited raw materials, outdated technology, labor shortages, and lack of credit. Marketing challenges involve intense competition, limited resources, lack of direct selling, and low consumer awareness. To address these challenges, the study suggests establishing a raw material bank, providing government incentives, developing products based on market trends, paying pending dues to workers, adopting advanced technologies, offering specialized training, promoting handloom products through government enterprises, and implementing a robust branding system.

(J. Venkata Ramana, D. Hanuma Reddy, K. S. Venkateswara Kumar, and Ms. K. Sirisha ,2019) in their case study on the marketing of handloom fabrics in Andhra Pradesh with reference to Guntur district, learned that the handloom sector is experiencing a decline due to inadequate government support, globalization, competition from power looms, and changing customer preferences. Despite the presence of sufficient government schemes, innovative designs and the unique skills of weavers are needed to boost sales.

Handlooms are an integral part of India's heritage, symbolizing its richness and diversity. Efforts should be made to enhance production, productivity, and marketing facilities through government schemes to improve conditions for handloom marketers.

(Bhabesh Hazarika Kishor,2018) in his study of Micro-entrepreneurship Development in the Handloom Industry with an empirical analysis Among the Tribal Women in Assam Found that women's involvement in handloom micro-enterprises significantly contributes to local economic development and empowers them against patriarchy and gender inequality. In Assam, tribal women enrich the local handloom culture and improve their socio-economic conditions through weaving. Factors like age, access to telephone, risk- taking behavior,

family history in handloom, connections with other micro-entrepreneurs, access to borrowing, and family income are significant for becoming micro-entrepreneurs. However, education, Government training, and working days are not significant. Infrastructure inadequacy and the need for proper training are major challenges. The study is limited to Bodo and Missing tribes.

(Sangeeth S, 2020) learns about the problems and prospects of handloom weavers in Thanjavur district and observes that handloom conveys a rich legacy, tracing back through the era of vibrant culture and the Indus Valley civilization. It is a crucial and evolving economic sector, as it supports the economy of a predominantly rural country. The handloom industry provides direct or indirect employment to a large number of artisans across the country. The Indian handloom sector is well-established and is the largest segment of cottage industries. This traditional rural sector, which is also the largest semi-urban sector, has spread extensively throughout the nation.

(Kumar Vinod, 2021) did an economic Analysis of Impact of Common Facility Centre on Handloom Silk Weavers of Varanasi. The handloom industry of India is very famous in the world for its delicate, diverse, and superior craftsmanship. It is a vital traditional sector that can be found throughout the country and supports millions of peoples in both rural and urban areas. It employs workers directly as weavers and indirectly like carpenters.

(Sarmah, Dipendra Kumar, 2006) conducted a socio-economic and demographic study on women weavers in the handloom industry of Kamrup district in Assam. Assam occupies a unique position in the handloom industry in terms of the number of producing units, looms, weavers, and production. The handloom industry in Assam is also distinctive because it is predominantly dominated by women. Assam and Manipur are the only two states in the country where about 90% of handloom weavers are female, while in all other states of India combined, female weavers constituted less than 35% of the total handloom weavers in 1995-96. Within Assam, Kamrup district holds a distinctive position in the handloom map due to having the highest number of looms and weavers.

With this background, a modest attempt has been made to investigate the socio-economic and demographic background of the women weavers to ascertain the extent to which their employment status has led to an enhancement in their status within the household and to analyze the impact of employment on the fertility behavior of married women weavers in

Kamrup district of Assam.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

1. To evaluate the revitalization of handloom industry in Chendamangalam via Chekkutty dolls
2. To assess the effectiveness of marketing strategies, particularly through the Incorporation of chekkutty dolls.
3. To examine the social and economic benefits gained by artisans in Chendamangalam through the revitalisation of the Handloom Industry through chekkutty dolls.

### **1.4 Need of the study**

Two significant reasons demand studies about traditional Indian toy Chekkutty dolls from Kerala because they represent both the cultural heritage and economic value. Traditional manufacturing processes linked with heritage materials act to safeguard Kerala cultural heritage while displaying native artistic competencies of the region. The cultural evolution of Kerala exists within the traditional Chekkutty dolls that present mythic characters and household scenes along with complex decorative patterns. Traditional expertise and cultural inheritance create growing appreciation in us because of their cultural importance.

The commercialization process of Chekkutty dolls boosts craft employment while supporting domestic business activity which leads to local monetary development. The sustainable lifestyle choices benefit disadvantaged social groups because they achieve objectives from the United Nations Sustainable Development. The world-class dolls maintain significant international market potential because their international distribution enables the spreading of Indian heritage and generates profitable foreign currency. India holds the potential to strengthen global control of the international handicraft market through exporting Chekkutty dolls.



Tourism will benefit from including Chekkutty dolls as an attractive cultural feature which demonstrates Kerala's rich culture and brings revenue opportunities. Tourists who visit can discover both traditional artisan methods and cultural meaning of these dolls which delivers an authentic cultural encounter. Investigating Chekkutty dolls enables children to learn about both traditional artistic techniques and cultural traditions and business development skills.

Artisanal workforces can benefit from the Chekkutty doll industry because it provides both specific employment opportunities and money generation potential that leads to direct national and local economic benefits through local sales and exports. Protecting traditional craftsmanship along with cultural heritage practices will guarantee permanent success for this business sector. The advancement of Chekkutty dolls as part of marketing efforts will support both cultural education and diversity across societies.

Economic development and growth become possible because of innovative and creative aspects that emerge through the expansion of the Chekkutty doll industry.

## **1.5 Methodology**

The research draws its information from two distinct data sources. Original data collected directly from its sources makes up the primary data source. The data collected from existing literature is classified as secondary data.

Structured interview schedule formed the basis of primary data collection for the study. Secondary data retrieved from newspapers, magazines, research journals along with the internet provides adequate support to these findings.

Primary data obtained from 30 handloom workers based at Chendamangalam. Sample was collected using the purposive sampling.

A structured interview schedule was used to gather primary data from the sample workers. The responses were collected using Google Forms. The data collected was analyzed through tables, pie charts and bar diagram.

## **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

Social Innovation Theory serves as an appropriate analysis platform to examine the selected subject through its creation of new solutions for complex social challenges. Social innovation functions as the main focus of the theory because it enables value creation for society within troubled economic and social areas. The essential theory of Social Innovation helps researchers comprehend entrepreneurial impact on social transformation through processes which lead to enhanced community development by creating parallel economic and social impacts.

The implementation of new approaches and products and operational systems which address unmet social needs through community-based empowerment falls under social entrepreneurship innovation. The innovative approach in social transformation produces wide-ranging outcomes which reform all aspects of social systems and economic operations. Local economic growth accompanies job creation as well as social equality advancement when social entrepreneurs launch the Chekutty Dolls project. Through this initiative damaged sarees from flooding undergo reconstruction to become motivational objects that produce dual social and economic advantages for all members of the community.

**Economic and Social Impact:** Effective social innovation impacts multiple sectors, including economic development, social cohesion, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. Initiatives like Chekutty Dolls enhance community resilience, strengthen local identity, and preserve cultural heritage by fostering social capital and empowering local communities. These outcomes are particularly crucial in post-disaster contexts where communities urgently need both economic recovery and social rehabilitation.

**Sustainability and Collaboration:** Sustainable social innovation practices are vital for ensuring the longevity and impact of initiatives like Chekutty Dolls. Strategies that promote community participation, responsible resource management, and cultural preservation help maintain the momentum of social enterprises. By adopting these practices, social entrepreneurs can minimize the adverse effects of economic disruptions and build long-term social and economic resilience.

Another theoretical framework for analyzing the economic impact of social innovation involves collaborative efforts and policy support. International cooperation, supportive policy frameworks, and cross-sector partnerships are critical for scaling social innovations and ensuring their sustainability. These collaborative efforts are key to achieving long-term social and economic revitalization, especially in vulnerable communities affected by disasters.

The Chekutty Dolls initiative exemplifies how social innovation can address both economic and social challenges, turning adversity into opportunity and contributing to community resilience and development.

## **1.7 Limitations of the study**

### **Data Access and Reliability Issues**

Research depth gets its direction from the availability of whole financial and commercial data sets. The validation of research findings through verification of self-reported data depends on standardized measurement procedures that influence both research reliability and the capability to produce generalizable results.

### **Methodological Challenges**

The final findings become less representative because the study included a tiny research sample and had possible participant selection bias. The research limitations stem from using only qualitative findings which fail to deliver quantitative data that supports generalizable conclusions.

### **Time-Related Constraint**

Short-term performance-based monitoring systems prove ineffective for both sustainable outcomes detection and long-term effect assessment. The people participating in recovery sessions originate from particular disaster situations whose unique data cannot apply to outside environments.

## **CHAPTER- 2**

### **Overview of Handloom Sector in Chendamangalam and Origin of Chekutty Dolls**

## **2.1 Introduction**

The handloom industry in Kerala plays an important role in both the economic and cultural facets of the state. Traditional weaving has flourished in this place from generation to generation on the basis of skills and craftsmanship handed down from earlier generations. Current figures suggest that the industry provides employment to over 1.75 lakh people in districts such as Thiruvananthapuram, Kannur, Kozhikode, Palakkad, Ernakulam, and Thrissur, Kollam and Kasargod.

Though it is of significance to Kerala's economy and culture, the handloom industry faces various challenges. Increased prices of raw materials, backdated marketing practices, and low production have severely impeded competition from weaving industries globally. Natural calamities like the 2018 flood have wrecked extensive havoc on many weaving communities.

From such an area, we turn to Chendamangalam—a small native town in Ernakulam district around 40 km from Kochi. Known for its peculiar handloom traditions is Chendamangalam that is a prominent weaving community that survives on this vocation. The 2018 floods plunged those communities into catastrophe as the floodwater submerged the looms and production came to a standstill. However, the weavers displayed an admirable resolve. Perhaps one of the best examples of their fighting spirits was seen in the making of the 'Chekutty' dolls, which were made out of sarees that were lost in the floods. The dolls provided a ray of hope and reassurance, and they earned resounding international acclaim and support, helping the local handloom sector to recover once again.

This chapter highlights the history, economic importance, and cultural value of Kerala's handloom industry, with a special focus on Chendamangalam. It explores the challenges faced by weavers and the creative ways they have overcome them, showcasing their strength and the lasting tradition of this craft.

## **2.2 Evolution of Handicrafts in Kerala**

The evolution of handicrafts in Kerala is a rich and complex narrative that spans centuries. Pre-colonial Kerala's handicraft traditions were molded by the state's indigenous cultures, including the Dravidian and Aryan influences. Many traditional crafts, such as wood carvings, metalwork, and textiles, were developed to adorn temples and create ritual objects. Folk art traditions, like Theyyam and Kathakali, also played a role in the development of handicrafts,

including mask- making and costume design.

The colonial period, from the 18th to the 20th century, was a time of considerable change in The handicrafts of Kerala. New materials such as glass and ceramics, as well as machine-based manufacturing techniques, revolutionized the handicrafts industry. European art and design also began to influence Kerala's handicrafts, leading to new styles and motifs. However, it also marked the waning of the traditional crafts because of the ready availability of machine-made products.

In the post-independence era, attempts were made to revitalize the handicrafts sector. For example, institutions such as the Kerala Handicrafts Development Corporation were set up. Tourism also helped promote handicrafts as many artisans sold their products to tourists.

Artisans in Kerala are, however, facing some problems such as the competition of machine-made products, unavailability of markets, and decreasing demand for traditional crafts. E-commerce and digital platforms have also brought new avenues for selling but posed problems, such as the need for digital literacy and marketing skills.

Despite these factors, handicrafts are an essential part of the social life of the state. The complex and dynamic history in the handicrafts sector of Kerala has been shaped by diverse cultural, economic, and social factors and still continues to be shaped today. The handicrafts sector has to promote those traditional crafts and techniques that are passed down to generations while going through various struggles of the digital age.

This, in general terms, is about ancient and traditional handicraft: those things handmade and crafted as artifacts of artistic creation using some kind of methodology and technique used through generations that is mostly based on designs and patterns with particular materials used reflecting the culture and society in addition to historical time within a community or region.

In ancient times, handicrafts played a significant role in the daily lives of people; they were used not only for decoration but also as functional objects in rituals and ceremonies and daily activities. Wood, stone, clay, and textiles were used as natural materials for the production of handicrafts, such as furniture, pottery, weaving, and metalwork.

Traditional handicrafts are often associated with specific regions or communities, and their

unique characteristics and designs are deeply rooted in the local culture and history. For example, the intricate wood carvings of Kerala, the colorful textiles of Gujarat, and the delicate pottery of Rajasthan are all renowned for their exceptional craftsmanship and beauty.

Handicrafts are made products with a high level of craftsmanship, involving patience, attention to detail, and skills. There is training and strict apprenticeships involved in the making of handicrafts that have passed through generations. The process of creating handicrafts can be time-consuming and labor-intensive, requiring an enormous amount of knowledge on the materials, tools, and techniques applied during the production process.

Despite the difficulties that traditional handicrafts had to go through in the modern world, such as the generation of machine made items and the loss of traditional skills, many artisans, institutions, and organizations strive for their preservation and promotion. Such attempts to restore traditional handicrafts include the provision of training and support to artisans, promotion of handicrafts through exhibitions and marketing campaigns, and encouragement of the utilization of sustainable and eco-friendly materials.

The ancient and traditional handicrafts are an integral part of our cultural heritage, reflecting the skill, creativity, and traditions of artisans across the world. By preserving and promoting these handicrafts, we can help to ensure their survival for future generations and celebrate the beauty and diversity of traditional craftsmanship.

### **2.3 Development of Handicraft during the colonial rule**

The colony period from the 18th to the 20th century is significant in the growth of handicrafts in India, particularly Kerala. During this period, new materials and techniques were introduced by British colonial powers, changing the handicraft sector.

The new materials and techniques are one of the immense developments brought about during the colonial period. The British brought with them new technologies, such as machine-based manufacturing, which enabled mass production of goods. This led to the introduction of new materials, such as glass, ceramics, and metal alloys, which were incorporated into traditional handicrafts. For example, the introduction of glass led to the development of intricate glasswork, while the introduction of metal alloys led to the creation of intricate metal crafts.

New markets for handicrafts started to be developed during this period. Indians could sell their handicrafts to the world through trade links that the British set up elsewhere in the world. Demand for handicrafts grew, especially for things that were regarded as "exotic" or "oriental." Artisans began to make variations of their traditional crafts to satisfy the new markets that emerged.

However, the colonial era also had a negative impact on the development of handicrafts. The introduction of machine-made goods led to a decline in demand for traditional handicrafts, as they were seen as being more expensive and time-consuming to produce. Many artisans were forced to abandon their traditional crafts and take up new occupations, leading to a decline in the number of skilled artisans.

The colonial period also introduced Western design aesthetics into Indian handicrafts. This movement was encouraged by the British; but the use of Western designs and motifs by artisans led to the production of hybrid crafts, as these were neither traditional nor modern. It adversely affected handicraft development because it resulted in loss of traditional skills and techniques.

Despite these challenges, the colonial era also saw the emergence of new forms of handicrafts that were influenced by Western designs and techniques. For instance, European-style furniture making led to the creation of intricate wooden furniture influenced by Western designs.

The development of handicrafts during the colonial era was marked by both positive and negative trends. Though new material and techniques began to be integrated into handicrafts and enabled the production of new handicraft forms, their imposition, such as the one of Western aesthetic design and decay of traditional forms of handicrafts, weakened the growth and development of the handicraft form. Nonetheless, the colonial periods provided a fertile ground for contemporary handicraft production in India in the context of new markets and technologies.

## **2.4 Post Independence Development as Challenges in the Handicraft Sector**

Post-independence, the handicraft sector in India underwent significant developments and challenges. The Indian government launched initiatives to revive and promote traditional crafts, which had declined during the colonial era. The government established various



organizations, such as the All India Handicrafts Board, to promote and develop the handicraft sector. These organizations provided training, financial assistance, and marketing support to artisans.

### Establishment of Handicraft Boards

At the state and national levels, handicraft boards were established to promote and develop the handicraft sector. The boards provided an important area for identification and promotion of traditional crafts, training and finance to artisans, as well as creation of market opportunities.

Training programs were also launched by the government to make artisans acquire new skills and techniques. These programs made artisans enhance the quality of their products, change according to the trend in the market, and increase their productivity.

Marketing and Export Promotion activities were undertaken to market Indian handicrafts across the world. The export level increased and they also got international recognition. The government took part in international trade fairs, organized handicraft exhibitions, and offered marketing support to artisans.

## **2.5 The Impact of Globalization on Kerala's Traditional Handicrafts.**

Globalization has transformed the wrong doers, taking their cloth, cement, granite and stone carving tradition to its zenith, thereby creating vast opportunities and ground of threats on them. Historically, the artisans of Kerala created unique handmade products out of local raw materials. Products like wood carvings, metalwork, coir products, and handloom textiles were intimately woven into the cultural and religious tradition of the land. But industrialization and influx of machine-made goods have posed grave threats to the existence of these folk arts.

One of the main challenges is further complicated by the availability of cheaper alternatives flooding the market. Products imported from countries like China and from other Indian states, such as machine-made items, have undermined the opportunities of Kerala's handicrafts. The other pressing problem has been the changing tastes of modern-day consumers, where convenience and cost invariably take precedence over art. Many traditional artisans are unable to compete with mass production due to labor costs being very high, the long duration taken in the making process, and they're not having large-scale marketing organizations.

Pretty well all the youngsters are moving away from traditional craftsmanship and into some other employment for better financial prospects. The specialized instructions handed down through generations are in grave danger of languishing away along with the number of skilled artisans. This issue is aggravated further by lack of institute-applied training courses in different types of traditional crafts.

However, amidst these enervating threats to the handicraft industry are the new opportunities brought about by globalization. The artisan can now engage the global market via the digital platform and social networking and ecommerce platforms. Service models like Amazon, Etsy, and Kerala Handicrafts Development Corporation's virtual store are now allowing artisans to have access to much wider audiences. This offers a fillip for handmade products, especially in niche markets where there is growing emphasis on sustainability, eco-friendliness, and authenticity.

This is the lesson: The government interventions and cooperative societies have played, on high occasions, a crucial role.

## **2.6 Challenges facing the Handicraft Industry**

Even with these developments, the handicraft industry faced many challenges. Some of the main challenges were:

### **Competition from Machine-Made Goods**

It was getting difficult for the handicraft industry to compete with cheaper, machine-made goods. Many artisans found it hard to compete with low prices and large volumes of machine-made goods.

### **Decline of Traditional Skills**

The traditional skills and techniques suffered decline because the artisans took up other jobs. The fall of the traditional skills posed a serious threat to the survival of the handicraft sector.

### **Access to Markets**

Artisans were unable to gain access to both domestic and international markets. Many artisans depended on middlemen who controlled the market and dictated the prices.

### **Exploitation by Middlemen**

Middlemen often exploited artisans because they controlled the market and dictated prices. This meant that artisans had low earnings and even faced a threat to their livelihoods.

### **Lack of Sufficient Financial Capital**

The sector was characterized by limited financial capital, which limited the ability of artisans to invest in new technologies or marketing efforts. Many artisans depended on informal sources of credit, which were characterized by high interest rates.

### **Changing Consumer Preferences**

The sector also was not agile with changes in consumer preferences: most artisans were not in a position to innovate or diversify their products. This lack of innovation capacity to adapt to changes in market trends jeopardized the survival of the handicraft sector.

## **2.7 Recent Initiatives and Developments**

In the past couple of years, the government has implemented several initiatives to support the handicraft sector. Some of the recent initiatives include:

### **Digital Platforms**

New digital platforms have enabled the artisans to sell their products. E-commerce platforms, social media, and online marketplaces have increased access to markets and customers.

### **E-commerce and Online Marketplaces**

E-commerce platforms and online marketplaces increase access to markets and customers. Many artisans have been facilitated by these platforms that have presented new opportunities to them in terms of selling their products.

### **Skill Development and Training**

There are training and skill development programs undertaken for the artisans. These programs helped artisans to enhance the quality of their products and keep themselves abreast with changes in market trends. They also increased their productivity.

### **Design and Product Development**

Efforts have been put in place to encourage design and product development. This has

empowered artisans to come up with new and competitive products. Many artisans have benefited from these efforts as they have diversified their products and changed with market trends.

### **Sustainability and Eco-Friendliness**

This is, however, greatly caused by heightened concern with sustainability and eco-friendliness; thus, it has made most artisans friendly to the environment. Most of them have been better because this sustains them in producing mostly eco-friendly products.

The handicraft sector in India, post-independence, has passed through great changes and hurdles. Despite the hurdle, it survived and kept thriving with a huge number of artisans benefiting from new initiatives and development. There is still quite some challenge the sector faces; only sustained efforts to promote and develop the handicraft sector would give positive momentum.

### **2.8 Overview Of Economic Significance Of Handicraft Sector Handicraft Sector in Kerala and its Contributions to Kerala 's GDP**

Kerala, the south western state of India, is well-known for its rich cultural heritage and traditional handicrafts. The handicrafts sector contributes to a considerable percentage in Kerala's economy as thousands of artisans find employment and generate incomes.

The handicraft sector of Kerala has a lot of job providers in it. This handicraft sector in Kerala provides many jobs, mainly in rural areas. Estimates put the sector's employment at about 200,000-250,000 artisans, whose primary source of income is handicrafts. This is quite a large number considering that most of these artisans are rural-based and cannot access other means of employment. The sector also offers opportunities for skill development and training, thereby enhancing the employability of artisans.

Kerala has several significant handicraft clusters, each specializing in specific crafts. These include Kasargod, which specializes in handloom and handicraft products; Kannur is famous for handloom and coir products; Kozhikode specializes in wood carvings and furniture making; and Thrissur is renowned for gold and silver ornaments. These are not only centers of handicraft production but also an important part of preserving traditional crafts and techniques.

It is one such sector that has significantly contributed to Kerala's GDP and employment. Nevertheless, there are issues with the handicraft sector. The biggest challenge here is

competition from machine-made goods, which in many instances are much more easily accessible and cheaper. Due to this, demand for more traditional forms of handicrafts has decreased significantly and creates big problems for the artists to earn a proper livelihood. The other major challenge is lack of access to both domestic and international markets. The limited access to markets has made it hard for most artisans in Kerala to sell their products and make a decent income.

Even handicraft production in Kerala experiences similar difficulties because of meager financial availability. There are various credit-constrained artisans; not all access modern technology, proper marketing avenues, and marketing promotions. Similarly, due to insufficient finances, handicraft products deteriorate significantly since the craftspeople compromise in respect of materials as well as skills for better income generation and keep prices relatively low.

The government has launched several initiatives to promote the handicraft sector in Kerala. Some of the major initiatives are: setting up the Kerala Handicrafts Development Corporation that caters for finance, training, and marketing support to artisans; and several schemes to provide access to credit and other financial services to artisans.

Apart from all these, the government also attempted to promote Kerala's handicrafts in both domestic and international markets. The government visited several international trade fairs and exhibitions where it showcased Kerala's handicrafts in front of an international audience. The government launched marketing campaigns for the promotion of handicrafts in Kerala along with tourist attraction to the state.

The handicraft sector in Kerala makes considerable contributions to the state's GDP and employment. However, it faces severe competition from machine-made goods and limited access to markets and financial resources. To combat these challenges, the government has undertaken several initiatives for the promotion of the sector and its enhancement of competitiveness. Despite these challenges, the handicraft sector remains an important element of Kerala's economy and culture. Therefore, appropriate steps should be taken to ensure its continued existence for the benefit of future generations.

## **2.9 Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Handicrafts Industry in Kerala**

### **Challenges of Handicrafts Industry in Kerala**

#### **1. Decline of traditional skills and knowledge.**

Many holders of these time-honored crafts are aging, while the younger generation often shows little interest in continuing these practices. As a result, there is an erosion of the specialized knowledge that has been passed down through generations; consequently, numerous traditional art forms are at risk of disappearing.

#### **2. Competition from machine-made products.**

The handicrafts industry struggles to compete with these items, which are typically cheaper and more widely available. This competition diminishes the demand for handcrafted goods, which are often more costly because of the time and skill involved in their creation.

#### **3. Limited market access and challenges**

Many craftspeople find it difficult to reach broader markets, particularly international ones, due to inadequate marketing strategies and a poor digital presence. Many of these individuals lack the resources or skills necessary to effectively promote their products, leading to a diminished visibility in an increasingly competitive landscape.

### **Opportunities for the Handicrafts Industry in Kerala**

1.The growing demand for sustainable and eco-friendly products Kerala's handicrafts, which incorporate natural materials such as bamboo, coconut shells and coir, align with these eco-friendly values and can effectively satisfy this increasing demand.

#### **2.Increasing consumer interest in environmentally friendly products**

Sustainable Trends: Consumers are becoming more aware of their environmental footprint and are choosing products that support sustainability. Kerala's handicrafts, which utilize organic and renewable resources, are thus well-positioned to capitalize on this trend.

3.Innovative and Modern Designs: fusing traditional craftsmanship with innovative and modern designs, artisans can produce unique items that appeal to contemporary tastes.

This approach ensures that handicrafts remain relevant in an ever-evolving market.

#### 4. Government Initiatives

However, the Kerala government is actively supporting the handicrafts sector, which could lead to further growth and opportunities. Although challenges exist, the potential for expansion is significant because of the rising consumer demand and supportive initiatives.

### 2.10 **Chendamangalam Handloom Weaving: A Historical Overview**

The Chendamangalam cluster of handloom weaving is famous for its benchmark quality. During its origin, the weaving of Chendamangalam was basically for the royal members of the Paliam family, who were the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cochin. Women of the royal family presented their dignity and status through their clothes by wearing Chendamangalam handloom products like Neriyathu, Kasavu Dhoti, Kasavu Sarees, and other traditional dresses. Men wore simple white fine muslin dhotis.

The designs would evolve, but the usage of these garments for traditional purposes would remain the same. Today, in the Chendamangalam cluster, traditional garments with a modern twist are produced.

#### Traditional Garments for Men and Women For Men:

Chendamangalam Dhoti remains one of the all-time classics. This unstitched fine muslin garment can be identified with a plain body and kasavu border. The body of the dhoti is left unbleached and white, while borders are crafted in plain gold or colored zari in shades of purple, blue, green, and black.

#### For Women:

Significance of Chendamangalam saree and Set Mundu The Set Mundu, also referred to as Mundum Neriyathum, is one of the oldest remnants of traditional attire for women. It consists of two pieces: the Mundu as the lower garment and Neriyathu as a wrap around the upper portion. It is sold as separate pieces or as a set. The Set Mundu still reflects Kerala's rich cultural heritage.

#### Distinctive Features of Chendamangalam Weaving

Chendamangalam weaving excellence is found in its quality of work. The great weavers,

committed to their job, work with tools in perfect harmony. It was famous for weaving 100 and 120 count cotton muslin and mostly made garments so fine that they said these pass through a ring. Unlike other handloom producers, who have changed to machine production, Chendamangalam still follows the traditional hand-weaving process. Organic and natural dyes ensure that their products do not lose freshness even after repeated washes, showing their superior quality. These traditions have made the town popular worldwide for its versatile hand-woven cotton textile.

#### The Devanga Community and Weaving

The Devanga community played a crucial role in introducing weaving to Chendamangalam. Historical accounts indicate that this community migrated to Chendamangalam during the 16th century, under the Paliam family, and brought their skills of making fine muslin dhotis. Another legend ascribes the origin of weaving to King Jayanath, who invited the Devanga community from Karnataka to enhance the culture of his kingdom by bringing their weaving skills.

From very simple and unadorned fabrics with kasavu borders, Chendamangalam weavers gradually advanced to Butta and Buttis patterns. These days, even the motifs come from the elements of the architecture of the Paliam Palace itself, a traditional approach combined with modernity.

### **2.11 The Impact of the 2018 Kerala Floods on Chendamangalam**

The 2018 Kerala floods wreaked the village of Chendamangalam, celebrated for its rich cultural heritage and thriving handloom industry. Days of relentless rainfall flooded the entire region, forcing families to abandon their homes and seek refuge in relief camps. Entire neighborhoods were submerged, leaving people with no choice but to flee, often with little more than the clothes on their backs, as cherished belongings and precious memories were left behind. Though the loss of life was minimal, the destruction of homes, livestock, and other essential assets caused immense distress, particularly for the vulnerable groups like the elderly and marginalized communities.

The handloom industry is the backbone of Chendamangalam's economy, and suffered disastrous losses. The weaving involves very intricate work which makes Chendamangalam sarees unique. The industry lost nearly all its finished products, raw materials, and looms.



Cotton yarn and dyed fabric were soiled by floodwaters, rendering them unusable. Many weavers, who were operating on meagre wages to begin with, were left unable to recover. In the absence of immediate financial resources, restarting production became a challenge to the survival of this centuries-old craft.

Other primary livelihoods also suffered during this disaster like agriculture. Fields were buried under silt and debris and could not be cultivated afterwards. Coconut trees and banana plantations with other vegetable crops lost their value. Meanwhile, after the floods, poor sanitation led to leptospirosis and other waterborne diseases. The environment plus the destruction of roads and other public utilities left rural areas and the vulnerabilities of those areas in relation to such a calamity.

Its cultural heritage was at a loss as well. The waters flooded ancient temples, the Paliam Palace, and the Paradesi Synagogue, among others, with damage that will last long. All these required an urgent form of restoration to save from permanent damage. Traditional knowledge transfer was disrupted, as artisans and craftspeople looked at the immediate issue of livelihood in response to their water problems.

In the face of these challenges, the community showed remarkable resilience. One of the most inspiring outcomes was the Chekutty dolls. From flood-damaged fabric, Chekutty dolls were made as a symbol of hope and renewal. Marketed with the slogan "Chekutty has scars but no stains," the initiative provided financial support to weavers, and it got national and international attention. The dolls became an emblem of Chendamangalam's recovery, blending social entrepreneurship with cultural preservation.

The efforts of the government, NGOs, and volunteers have helped the community with relief and rehabilitation. Emergency shelters, food distribution, medical aid, and financial assistance were given to those who needed it. Long-term measures like rebuilding homes, modernizing the handloom sector, and sustainable agriculture were brought into play to make the future more resilient. Tourism initiatives, such as heritage walks and weaving workshops, were implemented to help revitalize the economy and keep the identity of the village alive.

The Kerala floods of 2018 turned the table for Chendamangalam. Despite the destruction, that answer reflected how resilient and innovative they were as a community. Efforts to preserve this village's cultural and economic heritage inspire it today to remain a symbol of resilience and hope.

## **2.12 Women and the Textile Handicraft Industry, as in Chendamangalam**

### **1.The Role of Women Artisans in the Weaving Community**

Women artisan in Chendamangalam is important for the local handloom industry of textiles, some handlooms are woven for production and some serve as parallels to traditional weaving, such as the famous Chendamangalam handloom. Their creative skill and immense hard work ensures the quality and authenticity of textiles. From spinning and dyeing yarn to weaving complex motifs, women are involved in nearly every stage of the production process. By joining on his behalf, they maintain the skill of craft, but also allow their families and the wider community to prosper economically. Women also are cultural custodians caretakers of the artistic inheritance, keeping it alive and vital.

### **2.Inheritance of techniques across generations and its role in the preservation of tradition.**

The tradition of weaving with handloom in Chendamangalam has always been through inheritance, passed on from mothers to daughters and women of next generations. The chief such means of perpetuation of the integrity of the craft is intergenerational transmission. Women are teaching not only technical knowledge to the weavers, but the cultural meaning of the patterns, motifs and colors they were using.They train young family members they produce the traditions of the craft and then they appear on the changes of the market. In the current scenario of mechanization and indifference to handloom fabrics, these activities protect tradition.

### **3.Women Weavers and Their Changing Journey in Modern Society**

Economic challenges: though very much important, women weavers often face financial insecurity caused by the ever- shifting demand for handloom cloth and competition with mass- produced textiles. Means of access to fair pay and economic independence is still an issue

Barriers in Society: Most women artisan are situated "inside" patriarchal systems where their work and contributions might always go unseen or Eve unappreciated. Balancing home chores vs. work chores was difficult as it was, but it's even more difficult when the workload is delayed from making progress toward the gold.

Technological Changes: The rise of automated looms and ready-to-wear industries has meant that some of the clientele traditional handlooms occupied is now under threat, accordingly, women artisan need to adapt their own traditional practices to new technology as well as complementary creating their own tools.

Changing Role: Now women are playing leadership roles in cooperative societies and self-help groups, voicing for better working conditions, living wages, and greater market exposure for their produce. They are increasingly taking advantage of digital platforms for promotion of their work and with the goals to reach global audiences, thus helping to bridge the gap between tradition and modernization.

By overcoming these challenges, and exploiting newer ones, the women of Chendamangalam are not only reinventing themselves; they are keeping craft, whether on the looms or the canvases, alive and thriving and making a much stronger presence felt in the sector as well.

### **2.13 Textile Motifs and Patterns: Unique Design Elements of Chendamangalam Weaves**

Chendamangalam is famous for its traditional handloom weaving. The fabrics made here are unique because of their special designs and patterns, which reflect the area's rich culture and skilled craftsmanship. These designs are not just for decoration; they also have important historical and cultural meaning. Chendamangalam handloom fabrics are valued for their simple, graceful, and high-quality look. The main features of these weaves include:

Basic and Simple Patterns – Unlike fabrics with heavy decorations, Chendamangalam weaves are known for their simple designs. Thin borders, small checks, and stripe patterns are commonly used, giving the fabric a neat and stylish appearance.

Temple Borders and Traditional Stripes – Many fabrics include temple-inspired designs and classic stripe patterns along the edges, reflecting the beauty of Kerala's temple structures. These patterns are often made in contrasting colors, making the fabric look more attractive.

Floral and Nature-Inspired Designs – Some weaves have soft floral patterns inspired by Kerala's green surroundings. These patterns represent growth, prosperity, and a close

connection with nature.

These patterns in Chendamangalam textiles are deeply connected to Kerala's traditions and past. They are influenced by:

**Traditional Kerala Kasavu Sarees** – The well-known white and gold color combination in Chendamangalam weaves comes from the classic Kasavu sarees, which are worn during festivals and religious gatherings.

**Inspiration from Temple Art and Architecture** – Many designs look similar to carvings found in Kerala's old temples, symbolizing faith and spirituality.

**Effects of Trade and Colonial Influence** – Over time, Kerala was an important trade center where people from different cultures, including the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, came for business. Some patterns show a mix of European styles with Indian weaving methods.

Every design in Chendamangalam textiles has a story behind it. Weaving is not just a way for artisans to earn a living; it is also a way to keep their traditions alive. These designs:

**Preserve Old Weaving Traditions** – By continuing to create traditional designs, weavers pass down their skills and knowledge to the next generation.

**Represent the Community's Identity** – The special designs make Chendamangalam weaves stand out from other handloom fabrics, helping to keep the local weaving culture strong.

**Blend Modern Styles While Keeping Tradition** – Even though new fashion trends influence the industry, traditional patterns are still included, ensuring that these cultural designs do not disappear over time.

## **2.14 Origin and Significance of Chekutty Dolls**

### **The Creation of Chekutty Dolls**

In 2018, Kerala faced massive floods that affected millions and caused massive damage. Chendamangalam, a village famous for its handloom weaving, was hit hard. The floodwaters destroyed large amounts of handwoven fabric, making them unsellable and putting the weavers' livelihoods at risk.

Social entrepreneurs Gopinath Parayil and Lakshmi Menon saw this problem and thought of a way to help. . They worked with the weavers to turn the damaged fabric into dolls. These dolls, called "Chekutty" (a mix of "Chendamangalam" and "Kutty," meaning child in Malayalam), kept the marks and stains from the flood, symbolizing strength and survival. The work not only kept the fabric from being wasted, but it also gave the weavers a new source of income and a way to get things started over.

### Symbolism and Economic Impact

Chekutty Dolls became a sign of strength and hope. Their imperfections were kept on purpose to show the story of survival and healing after the disaster. This unique concept touched people's hearts in Kerala and beyond, bringing them together and making them proud of overcoming tough times.

For the weavers, the initiative was a lifeline. By repurposing damaged fabric into meaningful products, Chekutty Dolls provided an alternative source of income and ensured that Chendamangalam's traditional craft survived. The project showed how an easy idea can protect heritage assets while resolving economic difficulties.

### Sustainability and Global Reach

Chekutty Dolls show why reusing and recycling are important by turning flood-damaged fabric into special handmade dolls. What was once seen as waste became something meaningful. This simple but powerful idea made people think about using less waste, making smart choices, and living in an eco-friendlier way.

As news of the project went around the world, Chekutty Dolls became more than just toys. They became a sign of hope and strength. They became a reminder that people can come together, help one another, and rebuild with hope even in the event of a disaster. The project showed that even tough challenges can be overcome with creativity and cooperation, encouraging others to begin activities like this.

## **2.15 The Role of Traditional Textile Dyeing in the Chendamangalam Handloom Industry.**

Chendamangalam is a relatively small town, located in the Indian state of Kerala that has gained worldwide fame because of the artistry and craft of the handlooms and, more especially, the rich legacy of cloth-weaving. It is, therefore, very important to perpetuate traditional dyeing using natural dyes in the handloom weaving of textiles because the culture of the area limits it to the art of natural fabric dyeing because of its intergenerational nature.

In Chendamangalam, we find those techniques of natural dyeing from which pigments of the mute colors such as indigo, turmeric, pomegranate, and madder root are grounded out of local flora. The technique of dyeing uses a rather intricate procedure that comprises the entire process of preparation of the cloth, preparation of extraction, and hand application of the dyes. One practice that makes Chendamangalam stand out is a kudumbaka-a traditional practice of plunging the cloth into a pit that helps fix the dye. All of these processes added an aesthetic look to the attire, which cannot be attained with the use of synthetic dyes.

In Chendamangalam, natural dyes confer that clothing also maintains its integrity as a pro-environmental measure. Each garment has its own story, through the patterns and colors embraced by the local culture. Different collectors and enthusiasts are drawn to such textiles in pursuit of their authenticity owing to their unearthly beauty and craftsmanship.

## **2.16 The Creation of Chekutty Dolls as a Response to Disaster**

The Chekutty Dolls were created as an innovative and heartwarming response to the damage caused by the Kerala floods of 2018. The floods inflicted harm throughout the state in different forms for example displacement more than millions. Apart from that, they caused major economic and cultural losses, as well. Among the hardest-hit areas, the Chendamangalam village was one of the most affected ones, which is home to a traditionally crafted handloom industry for granted years.

The floodwaters permeated and soiled enormous quantities of handloom fabric, thus, they had become unsalable. From the last decade, the weavers of Chendamangalam were already in a poor state of affairs. Consequently, the flood was a devastating event to their livelihood.

Furthermore, the damage caused by the natural disaster seemed to be insurmountable. It was in such a dreadful situation that the Chekutty Dolls initiative succeeded in providing the

villagers with the needed hope.

Lakshmi Menon and Gopinath Parayil, social entrepreneurs, who were empathizing with the weavers conceived an idea that made use of the local artisans, brought the disaster into the light of being an innovation chance. A novel approach was brainstormed by them to upcycle the flood-damaged fabric and to create handcrafted dolls. The dolls named "Chekutty" (a word that is a blend of "Chendamangalam" and "Kutty," which is in Malayalam the term for a child) were intentionally imperfect keeping the stains and flaws from the flood intact.

Every Chekutty Doll was a symbol of patient endurance, and the belief that no natural disaster can defeat this community that lives with the hardships. What started out as a small project grew very fast, capturing the hearts of people from the local as well as international arena. The dolls, apart from acting as an instant financial injection for the weavers, played an incredible role in sending a strong message of hope and restoration.

The Chekutty Dolls creation became the true example of the power to create and stay together even in the face of a disaster of the Chendamangalam weavers.

## **2.17 Conclusion**

With an age-old legacy, the handloom and handicraft industries in Kerala contribute substantially to the cultural and economic texture of the state. The story of handcrafted art, ranging from temple art to viable utility textiles, becomes strongly entwined with Kerala's heritage, contributing speedily to Kerala's GDP and sufficient for sustaining a large group, although fraught with challenges due to mechanized competition, diminishing involvement from the young and the surrounding effect of globalization. While globalization continues to open new markets with web trading, it has also created harmful consequences for artisanal work.

A verifiable testimony of this legacy is Chendamangalam, which is the crux of Kerala's handloom weaving, unfortunately coupled with the devastation of the Kerala floods, which did not spare even this line of industry from wiping out looms and displacing artisans. However, women in times of adversity, have important role in reviving this art through sustaining traditional dye workers and detailed textile pattern designs distinct to Chendamangalam.

The ability to innovate has helped salvage the sector, and the development of Chekutty dolls symbolizes resilience and recovery; artisans have made disaster into an opportunity. Henceforward, changes should be made to notoriously bounce between keeping tradition alive, modernizing with the support of the government, and involving digital marketing if it is to keep Kerala's handloom and handicraft industry alive for future generations.



## **CHAPTER – 3**

### **Analysis on Social Entrepreneurship and Economic Revitalization in Chendamangalam with Chekutty Dolls**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Located at the heart of Kerala's rich textile heritage, the handloom industry of Chendamangalam faced an unprecedented crisis when devastating floods threatened the village. From this challenge emerged an innovative solution: the Chekutty dolls, handcrafted dolls made from soiled fabric that became the catalysts of community recovery. This chapter examines how this grass root initiative evolved into a remarkable example of social entrepreneurship, weaving together economic revitalization with protecting ancient culture.

Through a detailed survey of 30 participants from the Chendamangalam handloom sector, this research captures the grass root level impact of the Chekutty initiative. The survey showed that 93.3 per cent of respondents were women, highlighting the importance of female artisans in this industry.

This data not only reveals the immediate economic impact of the Chekutty doll initiative but also shares broader implications for community resilience, skill development, and preserving traditional craftsmanship amidst adversity. This chapter explores how, through both such quantitative metrics and qualitative insights, a crisis-born initiative into a sustainable model for economic revival and cultural preservation can be transformed.

**Figure 1: Gender of the respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	6.7%
Female	93.3%

Source: Primary Data

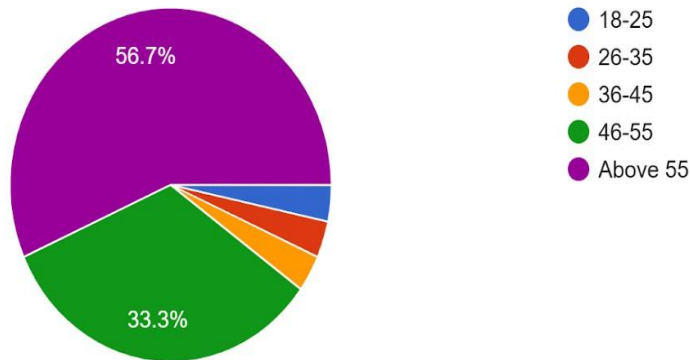
The survey shows that 93.3 per cent of the participants were female, with only 6.7 per cent being male, which emphasizes the large female workforce in the Chendamangalam handloom industry.

This also shows that women have been vital in producing Chekutty dolls and aiding the community's recovery following the floods, illustrating their key role in economic revitalization. The findings highlight the importance of social entrepreneurship projects like Chekutty in empowering women, offering financial support, and promoting community rebuilding, while also pointing out the necessity for customized assistance to further boost their contributions and opportunities.

**Figure 2: Age of the Respondents**

Age

30 responses



Source: Primary data

Most respondents (56.7%) were over the age of 55, with 33.3 percent falling into the 46–55 age range, showing that older workers are predominant in the Chendamangalam handloom sector.

This trend underscores the reliance on skilled, traditional artisans who have a deep connection to the craft. In contrast, younger individuals (18–45) made up only 9.9 per cent of the workforce, suggesting a generational gap that may stem from younger people pursuing different career paths. The findings emphasize the significance of initiatives like Chekutty in supporting the livelihoods of older artisans and preserving traditional skills, while also highlighting the necessity for strategies aimed at attracting and training younger generations to maintain the handloom tradition.

**Figure 3: Experience in the Handloom Industry**

Experience in handloom industry	Percentage
Less than one year	Nil
1-5 years	20.7%
5-10 years	24.1%
More than 10 years	55.2%

Source: Primary Data

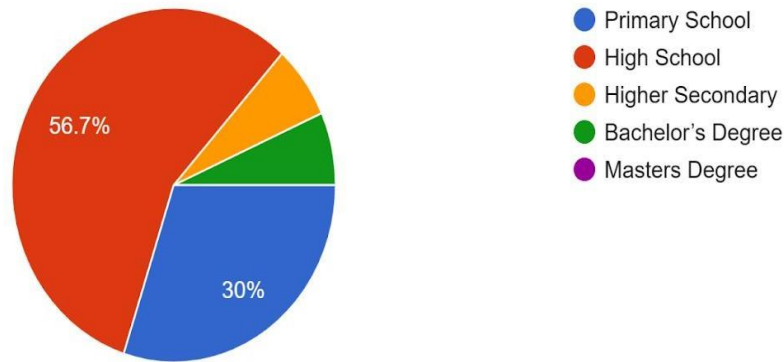
The data shows that a large majority of respondents (55.2%) have more than 10 years of experience in the handloom industry, with 24.1 percent having 5 to 10 years and 20.7 percent with 1 to 5 years. Notably, there were no respondents with less than a year of experience, which indicates a shortage of new entries in the sector.

This indicates the dependence on skilled and experienced artisans in the Chendamangalam handloom industry. The Chekutty dolls initiative seems to have offered essential support to these seasoned workers, enabling them to utilize their skills to recover from the flood. However, the data also points to the necessity of implementing strategies to attract and retain younger generations in the industry to ensure its sustainability and growth.

**Figure 4: Level of Education**

Level of Education

30 responses



Source:Primary Data

Most respondents (56.7%) have completed high school, while 30 percent have only primary education. A small fraction (6.7%) has attained higher secondary or bachelor's degrees, and there are no individuals with a master's degree.

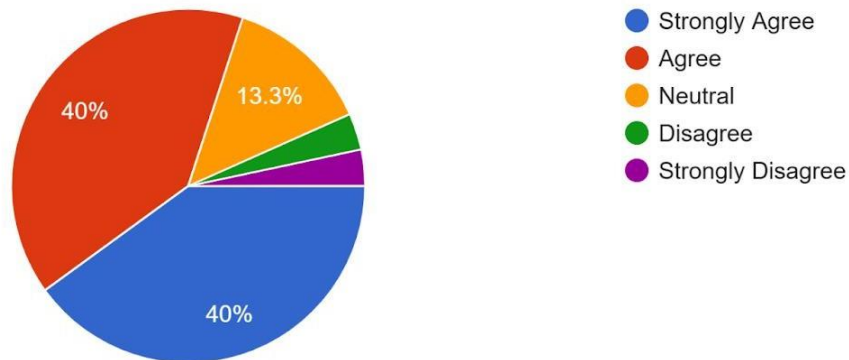
This suggests that the workforce in the Chendamangalam handloom industry mainly consists of people with basic to moderate educational backgrounds. The Chekutty dolls initiative likely offered a practical and accessible way for these workers to apply their traditional skills and years of experience to recover economic losses caused by the floods. This information underscores the need for inclusive opportunities that accommodate different educational levels and promote skill development for better socioeconomic results.

## **PART A: Revitalization of Handloom Industry in Chendamangalam via Chekkutty dolls.**

**Figure 5: Recovery of handloom Industries in Chendamangalam since the floods**

The handloom industries in Chendamangalam have recovered well since the floods.

30 responses



Source:Primary Data

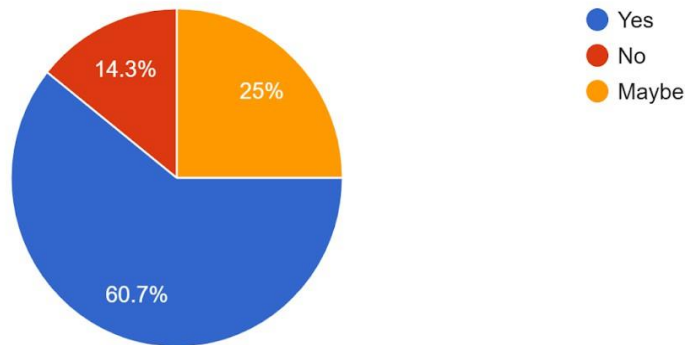
A majority of respondents (80%) either strongly agree or agree that the handloom industry in Chendamangalam has made a notable recovery since the floods, suggesting that recovery initiatives like the Chekutty doll project have had a positive effect. The 13.3 percent of respondents who remain neutral may indicate uncertainty or mixed feelings about the recovery process. A small minority (6.6%, combining those who disagree and strongly disagree) expressed dissatisfaction, which could point to individual challenges or unmet expectations.

Overall, the data highlights the importance of social entrepreneurship in facilitating recovery while also identifying areas that need further attention to address ongoing concerns and the need to provide comprehensive support.

**Figure 6: Government relief packages and other assistance during the natural disaster**

Did you receive any government relief packages ( Financial assistance) or other assistance during the natural disaster?

28 responses



Source:Primary Data

The data indicates that 60.7% of respondents received government relief or other forms of assistance during the natural disaster, showing that a significant number of workers benefited from external support. However, 14.3% did not receive any assistance, and 25 percent were uncertain ("maybe"), which may point to a lack of clear communication or awareness regarding the available relief measures.

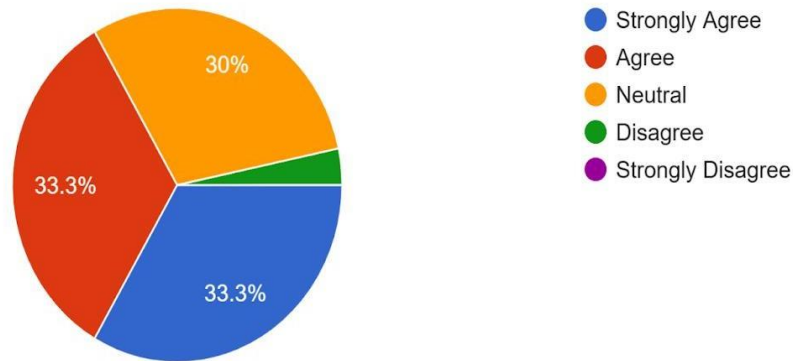
This implies that while government and organizational efforts reached most workers, there are still gaps in access or information. The Chekutty dolls initiative played a crucial role in enhancing recovery efforts, particularly for those who either did not receive any government relief packages.



**Figure 7: Government relief efforts in supporting the handloom industry after the floods**

Did the Government relief efforts effectively supported the handloom industry after the floods ?

30 responses



Source:Primary Data

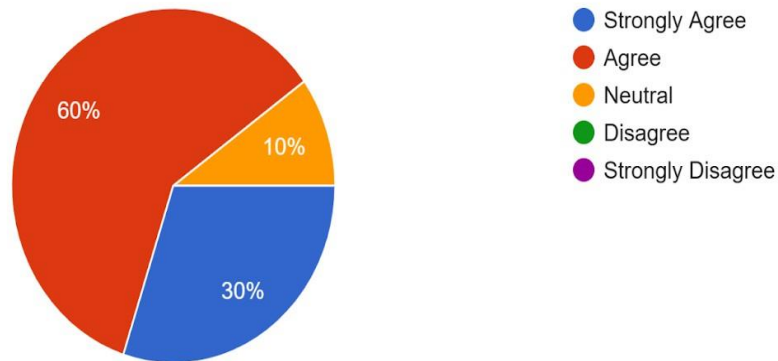
The survey responses reveal that government relief measures received positive assessments regarding their support for the handloom industry after floods since 33.3% of people strongly agreed while another 33.3% expressed agreement. Thirty percent of respondents exhibited ambiguous opinions about the government aid benefits suggesting their communications received a neutral response. The measurement showed that only 3.4% disagreed with the support while most artisans received adequate government relief or deemed the assistance acceptable ( $33.3\% + 33.3\% = 66.6\%$ ).

The majority value government relief efforts in recovery yet neutral and negative responses suggest possible deficiencies in the distribution or accessibility or communication of relief projects. The support system can improve through better implementation which will provide complete relief to handicraft workers during future recovery operations.

**Figure 8: Impact of Chekkutty Dolls on increasing demand for traditional handloom products among younger generations**

To what extent do you agree that the incorporation of Chekkutty dolls into the handloom industry has helped to increase demand for traditional handloom products among younger generations?

30 responses



Source: Primary Data

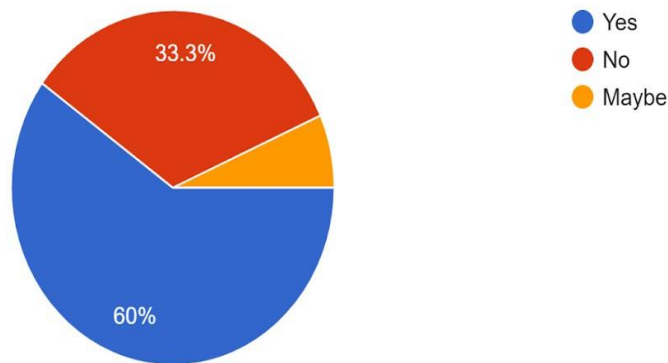
The survey data reveals that both 30% of respondents strongly agree and 60% agree that implementing Chekkutty dolls in handloom industries successfully increased traditional handloom product demand among youth consumers. The initiative demonstrates it has achieved success in drawing younger consumers towards traditional craftsmanship.

The results suggest that a moderate 10% of participants feel undecided about how the Chekkutty dolls will affect the industry in the future. Social entrepreneurship proves its ability to bridge traditional industry generational gaps according to the almost entirely positive feedback received. Additional marketing strategies alongside educational initiatives will empower the Chekkutty initiative to spread more effectively and sustain younger audience engagement.

**Figure 9: Introduction of new designs or products in the Handloom Industry**

Have you introduced any new designs or products other than Chekkutty dolls in the handloom industry?

30 responses



Source:Primary Data

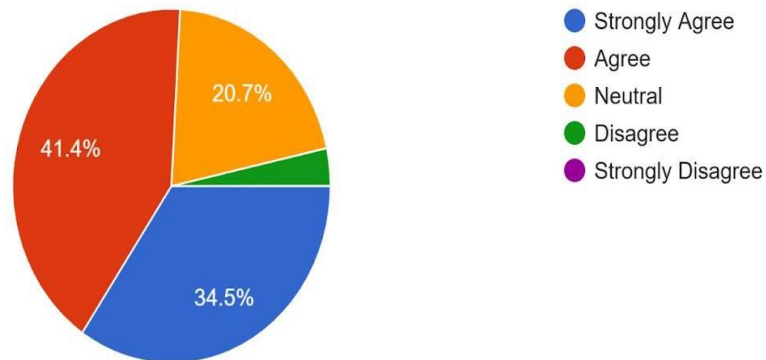
Results from the survey demonstrate that 60% of participants introduced fresh handloom items to the market that extend beyond Chekkutty dolls as evidence of their motivation toward diversification and innovation. A significant proportion of 33.3% reported a lack of new product introduction because they either show reluctance or they lack essential resources for product expansion. This group makes up 6.7 percent of the sample who could not decide because of their ambiguous business strategy or external hindrances.

A large number of handloom artisans show positive attitudes toward innovation yet substantial obstacles prevent others from embracing innovation. Support system improvements and proper training would empower craftsmen to experiment fresh designs thus empowering the sustainability of handloom production.

**Figure 10: Impact of Chekutty Dolls on the Handloom Industry's post-flood resilience**

Flood-relief initiatives focused on preserving traditional weaving techniques.

29 responses



Source:Primary Data

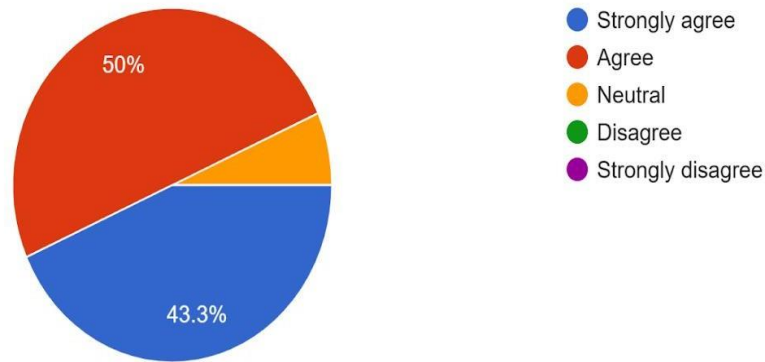
The initiative demonstrated how the handloom industry revived its strength after flooding by means of Chekutty dolls. The majority of 30 respondents (53.3%) together with 26.7% who strongly agreed showed belief in the beneficial effects of the initiative. 16.7% of respondents displayed neutrality and 6.7% chose to disagree with a minor consensus against the initiative.

The research indicates that Chekutty dolls intensely contributed to re-establish overall potency and financial security for the handloom sector post-floods.

**Figure 11: Effectiveness of Flood-Relief Initiatives in Preserving Traditional Weaving Techniques**

The chekkutty dolls improved the supply chain for handloom products.

30 responses



Source:Primary Data

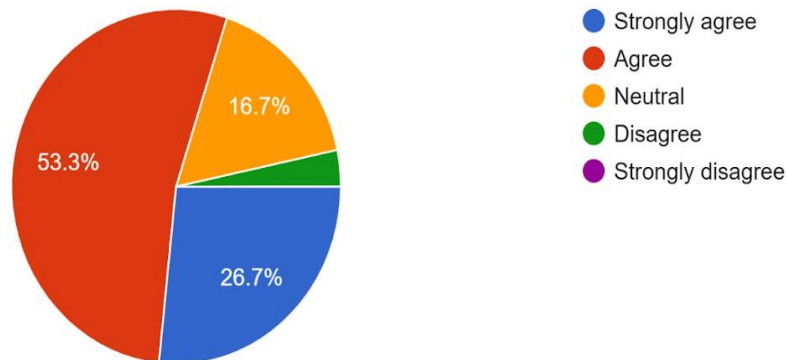
This analyzes the effectiveness of flood relief activities at protecting original weaving methods. A majority of 41.4% respondents in addition to 34.5% agreed that flood-relief initiatives successfully protected weaving traditions according to 29 participant responses. Apart from neutrality there were 20.7% respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed and some respondents disagreed fully.

Handloom sustainability depends on specially designed flood-relief initiatives according to research data that supports this claim.

**Figure 12: The Role of Chekkutty Dolls in strengthening the Handloom Industry post-floods**

The handloom industry's post-flood resilience has enhanced its competitiveness through Chekkutty dolls.

30 responses



Source:Primary Data

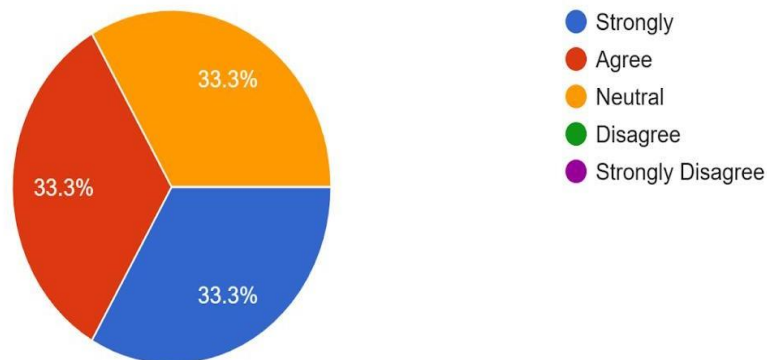
Survey participants showed support for Chekkutty dolls' ability to strengthen the handloom industry throughout its recovery from floods and boost its market performance. The survey participants strongly believed (53.3%) that the introduction of Chekkutty dolls brought better competitiveness to the handloom industry among the thirty responses.

Research data shows that the combined positive response reached 80% when 26.7% of respondents agreed with the statement in addition to the 53.3% who strongly agreed. The majority of 80% showed positive sentiments about the handloom industry through the statement with 53.3% strongly agreeing and 26.7% showing agreement. The survey data showed that none of the participants disagreed with the positive effect of Chekkutty dolls on both recovery and competitiveness of the handloom industry after the flood.

**Figure 13: Rehabilitation and Revival: Post-Flood support for Handloom Artisans through Chekutty dolls**

Post-flood rehabilitation efforts prioritized supporting handloom artisans.

30 responses



Source: Primary Data

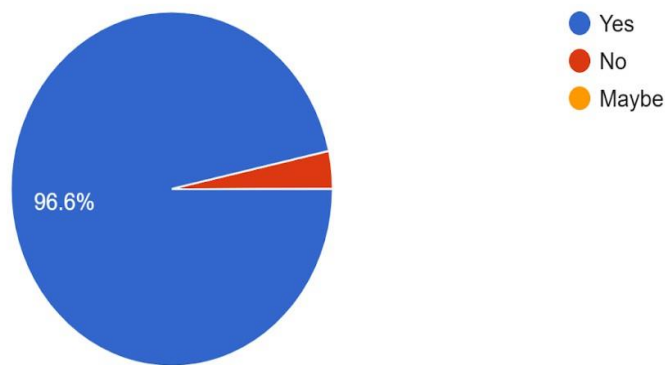
The results of the survey show an adequate evaluation of handloom craftsmen' post-flood rehabilitation initiatives. Of the 30 responders, 33.3% agreed, 33.3% strongly agreed, and 33.3% were neutral. There was no disagreement among participants, suggesting that these efforts are generally accepted.

The balanced distribution signifies that while many people accept the impact of the activities, some individuals remain unconvinced. The lack of disagreement indicates that rehabilitation techniques such as Chekkutty dolls have been received positively. The significant neutral response, however, indicates that additional improvements are required.

**Figure 14: Government and NGO Support in Reviving Handloom Businesses After Floods**

Did you receive any assistance or support from government agencies or NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) to revive your handloom business after the floods?

29 responses



Source: Primary Data

This was also a reliable organisational response, as demonstrated by the vast majority of those surveyed (96.6%) who said they received help or support from NGOs or government organisations in order to regain their handloom activities following the floods. Only some of them said they were unclear ("Maybe"), and even fewer said they were given no assistance at all.

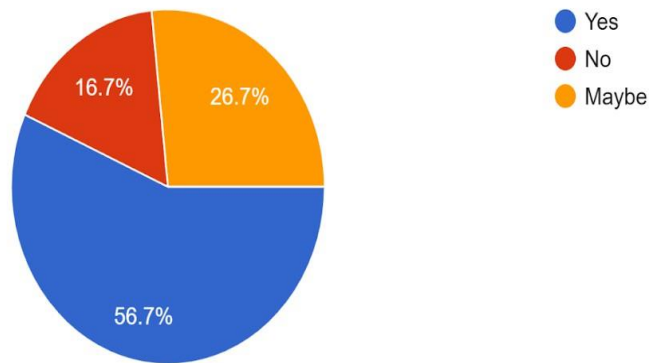
This immense help highlights how essential coordinated assistance is to revitalising businesses damaged by flooding. The proof demonstrates how well techniques for intervention work in guaranteeing the revival of old industries. The marginal "No" response however, points to significant outreach or gaps in knowledge that should be filled.



**Figure 15: Government collaboration to revive the handloom industry after the floods**

Did the Government effectively collaborate to revive the handloom industry after the floods ?

30 responses



Source: Primary Data

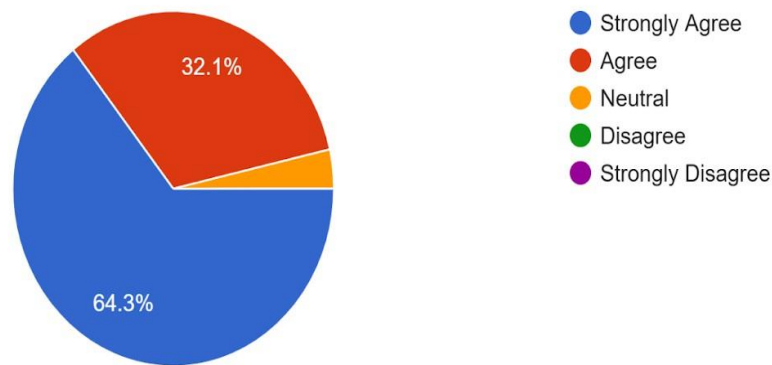
The majority of those who participated (56.7%) gave the government's efforts a positive rating, agreeing that it worked effectively with others to recover the handloom industry after the floods. However, 26.7% of respondents said they were unsure, indicating some ambiguity or ignorance regarding the partnership's scope. 16.7% of respondents disagreed, suggesting that the efforts were either ineffective or insufficient.

The findings show that government involvement is widely acknowledged, but they also stress the need for clearer communication and perhaps better initiatives to dispel uncertainty and ambiguity. This data can be used to inform future strategies to ensure increased community support and transparency in revival activities.

**Figure 16: NGOs collaboration to revive the handloom industry after the floods?**

What about NGOs? Did they effectively collaborate to revive the handloom industry after the floods ?

28 responses



Source: Primary Data

The majority of respondents (64.3%) expressed a very positive assessment of their work, agreeing that NGOs successfully collaborated to rebuild the handloom industry after the floods. Additionally, 32.1% agreed, confirming the notion that NGOs played a critical role in the healing process. A small number of respondents remained indifferent or disagreed, suggesting a little concern or disappointment with the degree of NGO involvement.

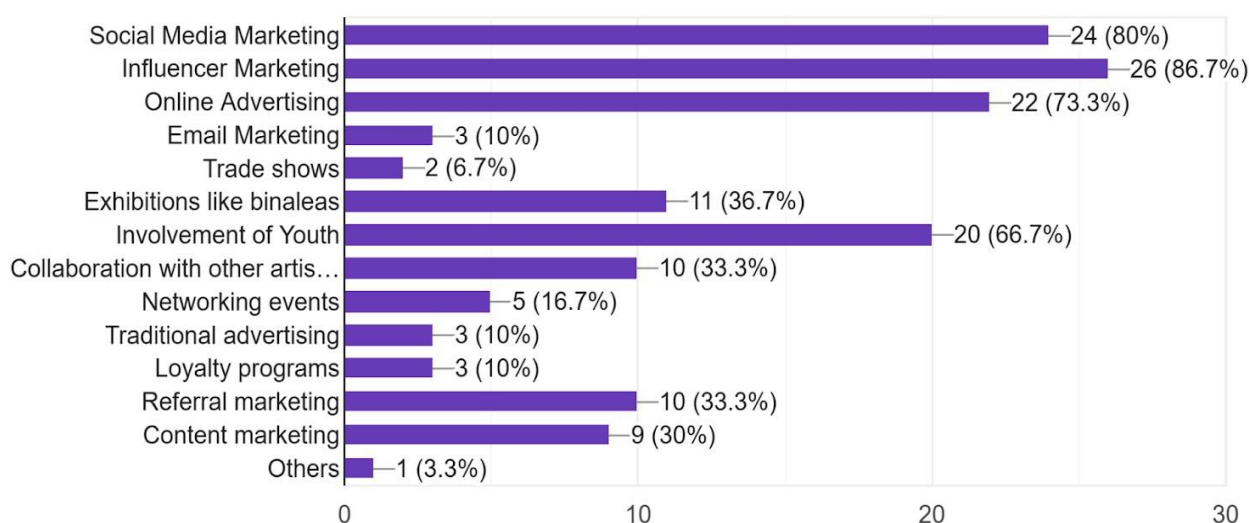
The clear majority demonstrates the widespread agreement on the effectiveness of NGO-led projects in post-flood rehabilitation. The findings mentioned above highlight the significance of preserving NGO collaboration in addition to possible avenues for communication and impact enhancement.

**PART B: To assess the effectiveness of marketing strategies, particularly through the incorporation of Chekkutty dolls, in revitalizing the Handloom Industry in Chendamangalam.**

**Figure 17: Effective Business strategies for expanding Handloom Business**

What business strategies have you used to spread your handloom business? (Please select all that apply)

30 responses



Source: Primary data

The most widely adopted marketing method for handloom enterprises was influencer marketing, as reported by 86.7% of participants. Digital marketing followed, at 80%. Internet advertising was used by 73.3% of the participants, which highlights a strong support for digital marketing methods. Low participation in the more traditional approach methods, such as trade exhibitions at 6.7% and email marketing at 10%, reveal that they are moving away from traditional approaches.

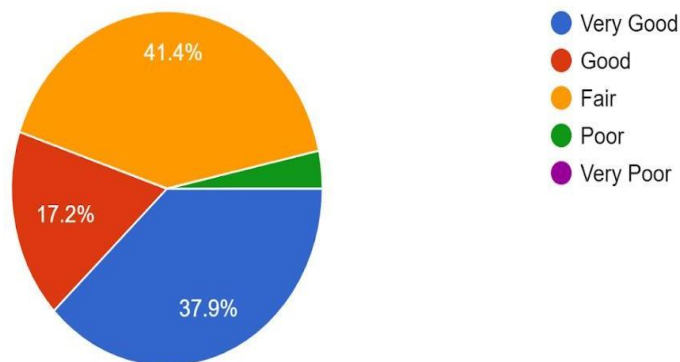
This indicates a renewed emphasis on locally made marketing campaigns, given the significant participation of young people (66.7%) and cooperation with other artists (33.3%). These results will become increasingly dependent on social media but also point toward the ways in which offline participation can be improved.

**PART C: Examining the social and economic benefits gained by artisans in Chendamangalam through the revitalization of the handloom industry through Chekkutty dolls.**

**Figure 18 : Economic Condition During the Flood, Before Making Chekkutty Dolls.**

What was your economic condition during the flood, before making Chekkutty dolls?

29 responses



Source: Primary Data

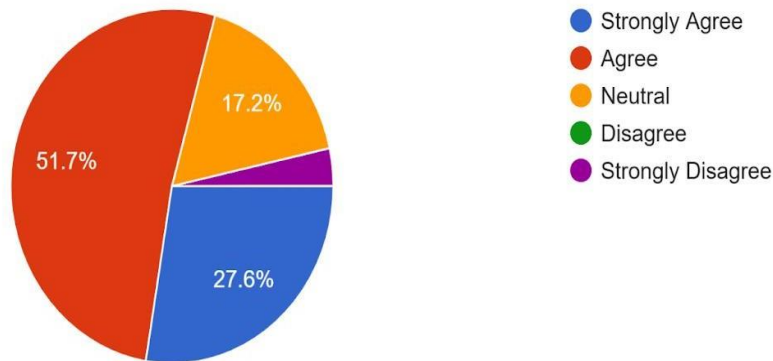
The survey results reveal that the economic status of the people before making Chekutty dolls during the flood was not good, 41.4% choose fair, 37.9% choose very good and 17.2% choose good. This therefore indicates that while some people were in a fairly comfortable financial situation, a rather large number of people had financial problems.

The data emphasizes the role of initiatives such as Chekutty doll-making in offering financial assist and livelihood creation. The aforementioned social entrepreneurship projects enabled people to regain economic stability and financial independence after the disaster through their involvement in such initiatives.

**Figure 19 : Chekkutty Doll Making Helped Recover Lost Livelihoods.**

The chekkutty doll making helped to recover lost livelihood.

29 responses



Source: Primary Data

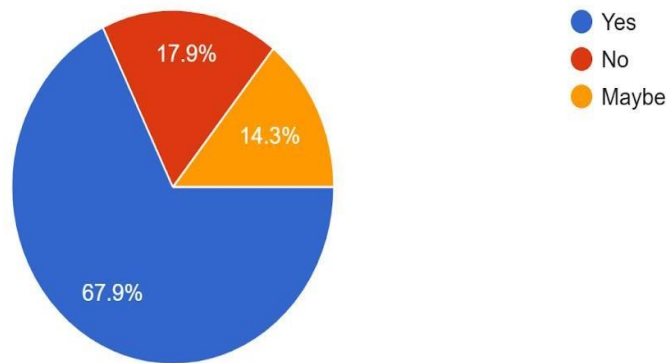
The survey reveals that Chekutty doll-making enhanced people's livelihoods which was lost due to the disaster as 51.7% of the respondents agreed and 27.6% of them strongly agreed.

This shows how social entrepreneurship plays a role in financial stability and skill enhancement of disaster affective communities. In addition to being a source of income, the initiative was a symbol of strength and community restoration, bringing light and financial aid to those who needed it most.

**Figure 20: Training and Skill Development to Make Chekkutty Dolls.**

Received training or skill development to make chekkutty dolls

28 responses



Source: Primary Data

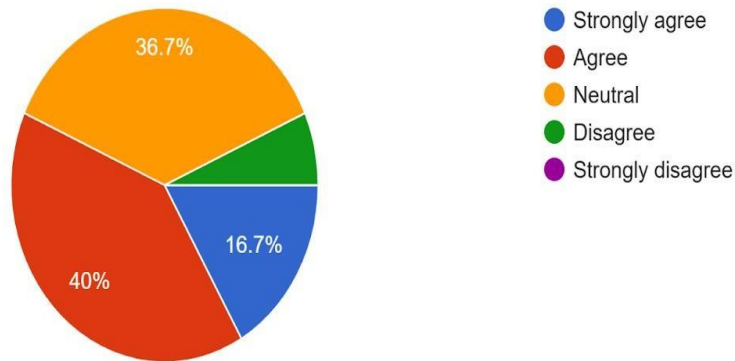
According to the survey, 67.9% of the respondents received some training or skill development in making Chekkutty dolls, 17.9% did not receive such training, and 14.3% were not sure.

It means that the greater proportion was able to avail the skill-building initiatives—very important in acquiring empowerment and enlarging their economic opportunities in the post-flood scenario. The trainings provided them with technical skills, confidence, and self-sufficiency to rise and contribute in a meaningful way toward the recovery of the community. This clearly highlights the findings' importance to structure a project in social entrepreneurship like Chekkutty for the importance of greater economic resilience and sustainable livelihoods.

**Figure 21: Post-flood profits from chekkutty dolls enhanced family's well-being.**

Post-flood profits from making Chekkutty dolls improved the family's well-being.

30 responses



Source: Primary Data

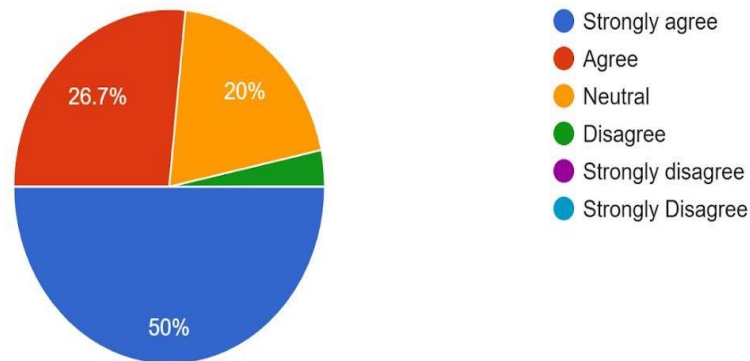
The survey shows that a large percentage of the respondents felt that the Chekkutty doll production had helped their family's well-being after the floods. In fact, 40% of the participants agreed, and 16.7% strongly agreed with the statement, which reflects the financial and emotional relief brought by this initiative. However, 36.7% were neutral while 6.7% disagreed, suggesting that, although beneficial for the most, the positive impact may well differ according to an individual's circumstances.

The statistics demonstrate how social entrepreneurship initiatives such as Chekkutty do not only accelerate economic rehabilitation but also enable the communities by making them stronger in all respects; however, further well-directed support might be needed to ensure benefits for all families benefitting from the scheme.

**Figure 22: Community Support During Floods Helped Cope With the Crisis.**

Community support during floods helped to cope up with the crisis.

30 responses



Source: Primary Data

This reveals that the process of coping had a good percentage of support from the community; indeed, as many as 50% responded with an emphasis that the aid of the community was essential to them in their hour of distress, while 26.7% concurred, depicting community strength and togetherness after the catastrophe. Nevertheless, 20% were neutral and a very small percentage responded otherwise.

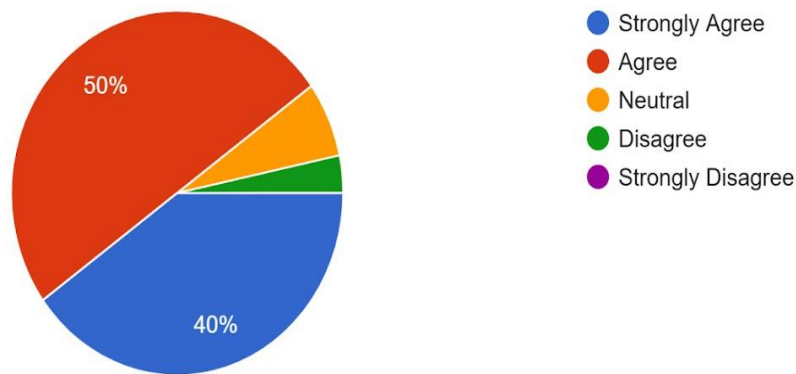
This implies that strong community networks and social cohesion have a significant role to play in the recovery from disasters by demonstrating how collective effort can reduce the psychological and material burden left on affected families. It further underlines the need for continued investment in community-based support systems that could enhance resilience against future crises.



**Figure 23: Stable Income Through Handloom Industry Revival With Chekkutty Dolls.**

Found a stable income earning method after the handloom industry's revival through Chekkutty dolls.

30 responses



Source: Primary Data

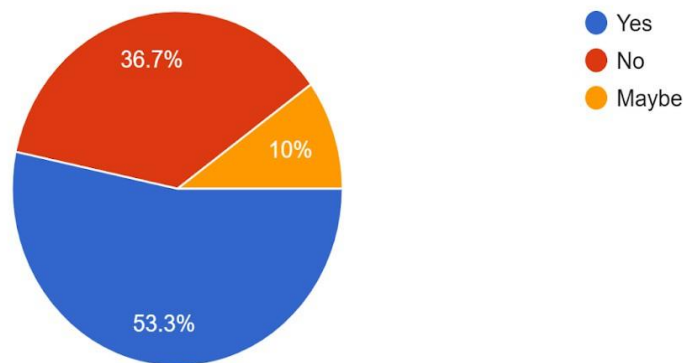
The survey results indicate that the handloom industry revival by Chekkutty dolls has brought regular employment to many people after the floods. Statistics show that 40% of the respondents strongly agreed and 50% agreed that Chekkutty dolls had paid for their groceries during the period, indicating how influential this social entrepreneurship initiative was.

Only a small section of the participants remained neutral or disagreed with it, which showed that there was a strong positive response to the project. It indicates that innovative projects like Chekkutty revived not only the economy of Chendamangalam handloom but empowered women artisans in sustainable livelihoods also, the artisans. The research further states that such initiatives must be continued and scaled up in order to maintain long-term economic resilience in affected flood communities.

**Figure 24: Financial assistance or loans to support the recovery of handloom business after the flood**

Did you receive any financial assistance or loans to support the recovery of your handloom business after the flood?

30 responses



Source: Primary data

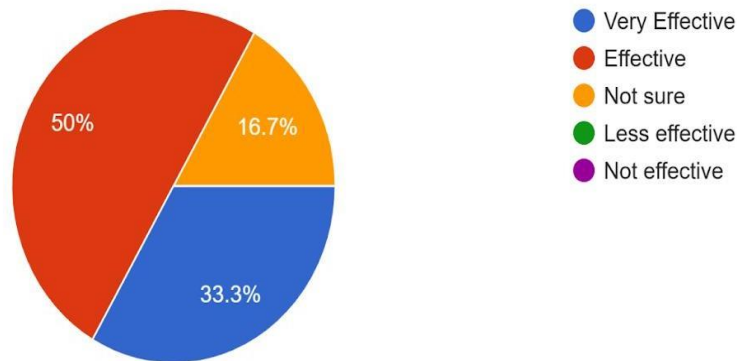
From the survey, it shows that a considerable proportion of handloom workers were financially supported in the recovery of their businesses after the flood. As outlined earlier, 53.3% of respondents reported receiving financial support or loans that pointed to external support for recovery. However, a majority of the workers, 36.7%, did not receive any financial assistance or loans. This shows a gap in support for some workers. Moreover, 10% of the respondents were unsure if they received financial assistance or loans, which is a lack of clarity or awareness about the support available or received.

Overall, the results indicate that financial aid or loans were a significant part of the recovery process for many handloom workers, but also underscore the need for more inclusive support mechanisms to ensure that all workers have access to the resources they need to recover from disasters.

**Figure 25 : Post- flood financial aid from institutions**

How effective was the Post-flood financial aid from the above mentioned institution or institutions?

30 responses



Source: Primary data

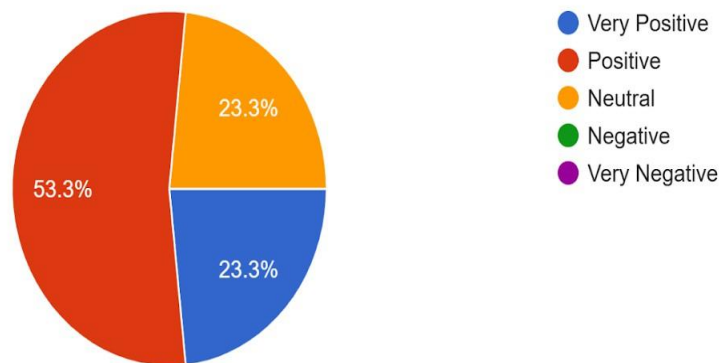
The results of the survey show that a large section of handloom workers of Chendamangalam did perceive the financial aid rendered by institutions as effective in the aftermath of the flood. Specifically, 83.3% of the respondents (33.3% + 50%) reported that the financial aid was either "very effective" or "effective" in supporting recovery from the flood. This indicates that the financial aid offered by the institutions was a significant factor in helping the workers regain their footing. However, 16.7% of the respondents were unsure about the effectiveness of the financial aid, which may indicate some ambiguity or lack of awareness about the impact of the aid.

In general, the study findings suggest that the post-flood financial assistance provided by the institutions was an important resource for the handloom workers, and its effectiveness was widely acknowledged.

**Figure 26: Post flood recovery of handloom business influenced by relationships with suppliers , buyers and other stakeholders.**

How has the post-flood recovery of your handloom business been influenced by your relationships with suppliers, buyers, or other stakeholders?

30 responses



Source: Primary data

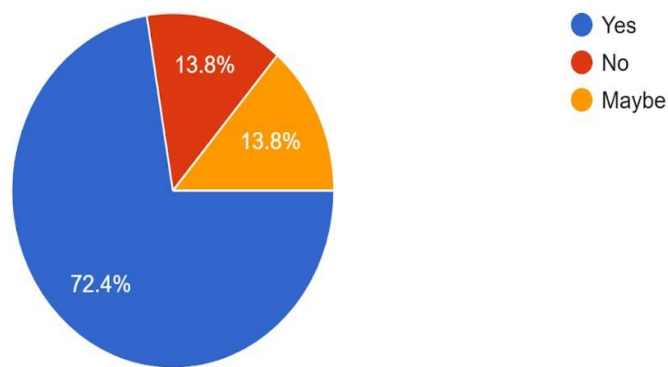
According to the survey results, the relationships between the suppliers, buyers, and other stakeholders were significantly influencing the handloom business of Chendamangalam during post-flood recovery. Most respondents, at 76.6%, indicated a positive or very positive influence; 53.3% of the respondents described the impact as positive, and 23.3% stated that it was very positive. It, therefore, means that good relationships with stakeholders played a large role in the recovery of the handloom business. Only 23.3% reported a neutral impact; it means that few workers thought that the relationship with stakeholders had no significant influence on their recovery.

Generally speaking, the importance of stakeholder relationships in making small-scale industries like handloom weaving recover following a disaster stands out in this study.

**Figure 27: Change in profit from making Chekkutty dolls after recovering from the initial hardships caused by the flood**

Did you experience any significant changes in your profit from making Chekkutty dolls after recovering from the initial hardships caused by the flood?

29 responses



Source: Primary data

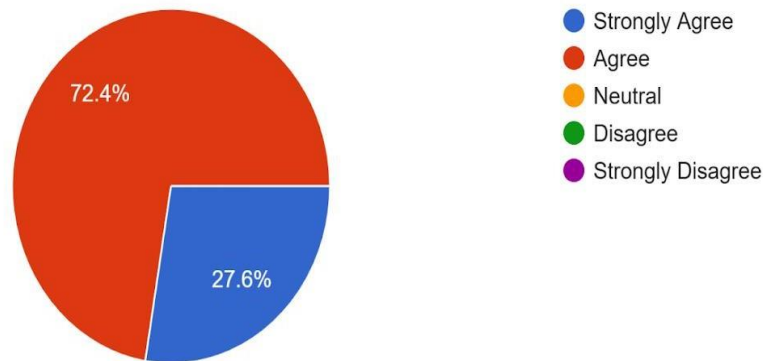
The results of the survey show a huge positive effect on profit margins on the handloom workers from Chendamangalam in making Chekutty dolls. A majority of 72.4% respondents reported a marked change in profit after getting back from the initial flood-related hardships. This means most workers earned significant profits from making and selling the Chekutty dolls as they could rebound from the negative impacts of the flood. As for 13.8 percent of the respondents, no one said they realized no difference at all, but 13.8 percent claimed not to know whether it mattered.

Overall, the results suggest that producing Chekutty dolls was a profitable business that significantly helped to revitalize the economy of the handloom workers in Chendamangalam.

**Figure 28: Sales of handloom products after post flood marketing initiatives**

Sales of handloom products increased after post-flood marketing initiatives.

29 responses



Source : Primary data

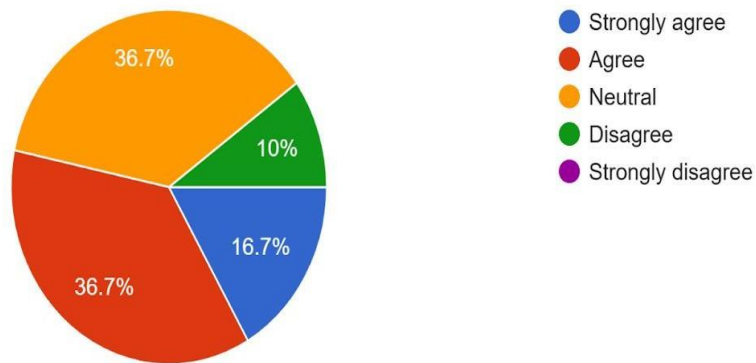
Survey findings reveal that post-flood marketing initiatives positively correspond to an increased sales figure for handloom products in Chendamangalam. It has been noticed that a striking 100% respondents admitted a positive effect with a significant percentage of 27.6% stating 'strongly agreed' and 72.4% respondents stating 'agreed' for the post-flood marketing initiatives in respect to the increased sales figure of handloom products.

This overwhelming consensus underlines the effectiveness of targeted marketing efforts in revitalizing the handloom industry, which was severely affected by the flood. The findings suggest that the marketing initiatives played a pivotal role in enhancing the visibility and appeal of handloom products, ultimately leading to increased sales and contributing to the economic revitalization of the region.

**Figure 29 : Savings increased due to stable income from handloom work**

Savings increased due to stable income from handloom work .

30 responses



Source: Primary data

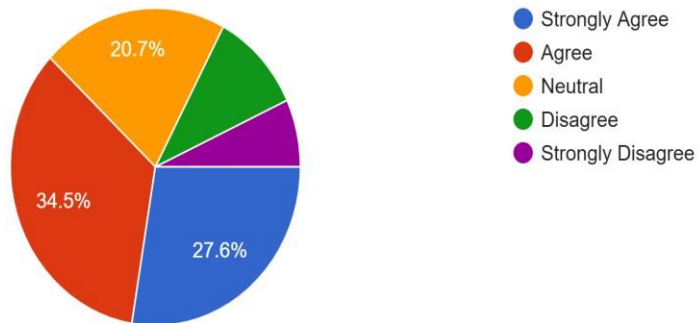
The survey results indicate that the stability of income from handloom work had a moderately positive impact on the savings of the workers in Chendamangalam. A significant proportion of respondents (53.4%) reported an increase in savings, with 16.7% strongly agreeing and 36.7% agreeing that their savings had increased due to stable income from handloom work. However, 36.7% of the respondents showed neutrality, implying that the impact of stable income on savings is person-specific. Further, 10% of the respondents were against the proposition, which indicated that stable income from handloom work may not necessarily have meant savings for all workers.

Overall, there are indications of a positive linkage between stable incomes from handlooms and an improved financial standing of many working members, yet variations and underlying factors may arise between individuals or across different periods with respect to income stability-savings linkages.

**Figure 30: Promotion of Chendamangalam Handloom through Tourism**

Do you believe that promoting Chendamangalam handloom products through tourism initiatives can further enhance the industry's growth?

29 responses



Source: Primary data

The survey results indicate that tourism promotion could have a positive impact on the Chendamangalam handloom industry. A significant proportion of respondents (64.3%) either agreed or strongly agreed that such initiatives would enhance industry growth. However, 17.9% of respondents remained neutral, and 17.8% disagreed, indicating some skepticism regarding the effectiveness of this approach.

Overall, the findings suggest a positive linkage between tourism promotion and industry growth, though other factors such as market access and financial support may influence its success.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This research explores the vital role that Chekutty dolls play as a cultural and economic response to the catastrophic floods that hit Kerala in 2018. What began as a symbol of hope and resilience has now evolved into a symbol of community solidarity and revival, especially for the handloom industry, which was most affected by the floods. It tends to highlight ways in which the dolls are making a difference during the emotional recuperation of this region and fulfilling an important function in the regional economic and social recovery of damaged communities.

The three primary objectives of the study are: 1) post-floods, revitalization of the handloom industry; 2) effectiveness of marketing strategies for promoting Chekutty dolls; and 3) economic and social benefits from their production and sale. In this regard, this research looks into the production and marketing of Chekutty dolls in order to determine how these handcrafted items play a role in revitalizing the industry in the aftermath of such a natural disaster.

This research provides an in-depth analysis of how the dolls are turning out to be a tool for socio-economic empowerment, highlighting the impact on local communities and how they are going to preserve the cultural heritage of Kerala. It aims to give a comprehensive overview of the different factors that would influence the success and sustainability of the Chekutty doll initiative.

This comparative analysis is based on multi-faceted approaches employed in the revival of this unique craft. Through this study, understanding the complex dynamics of the handloom sector, community engagement, and market outreach, it aims to reveal how these dolls become a symbol of resilience and livelihood. In doing so, the study promotes more awareness and appreciation of local crafts, contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage, and provides concrete economic opportunities for affected communities.

#### **4.2 Findings**

Chekutty dolls have emerged as the iconic and flagship product of the re-emergence of the handloom industry in Chendamangalam. Building on that, the impact of the Chekutty dolls on

the handloom industry in Chendamangalam is explored vis-à-vis the post-flood recovery and revival.

Through the primary data collected by directly surveying people, the paper unfolds all significant insights concerning how Chekutty dolls will enhance recovery activities of the handloom industry. Specifically, it focuses on checking the effectiveness of Chekutty dolls for increasing youth consumption of handloom products in an innovative way as well as improving the diversified range of traditional products, leading towards competitiveness for this industry as well.

This study identifies several key objectives, such as assessing the impacts of Chekutty dolls on the handloom industry at Chendamangalam; examining the effects of Chekutty dolls in promoting recovery and revitalization; evaluating whether Chekutty dolls do increase demand among youth consumers of traditional handloom products; and investigating the role of Chekutty dolls in innovation and diversification at the handloom industry.

The findings of this study serve as a lens through which to understand the impact of Chekutty dolls on the handloom industry in Chendamangalam and its potential as a model for promoting recovery and revitalization of traditional industries. In this study, by exploring the experiences and perceptions of handloom artisans and stakeholders in Chendamangalam, it will be possible to understand the nuanced impact of Chekutty dolls on the handloom industry and its potential for promoting sustainable development.

Ultimately, the study tries to see through what impact Chekutty dolls give to the handloom industry in Chendamangalam, analyze whether it effectively promotes recovery and revives the community, or not, and evaluate its latent capacity as a model to set up the sustainable models for traditional industries.

#### **4.3 Demographic Findings**

It is necessary to determine the demography of the handloom workers and stakeholders of Chendamangalam so that the contribution of Chekutty dolls to the industry can be approximated. The age profile of the respondents provides valuable information about the social, economic, and cultural environment of the industry.

Age Distribution

Most of the respondents (56.7%) were more than 55 years, indicating that the handloom industry in Chendamangalam is controlled by aging workforce. The outcome is an indicator of the need for intervention that provides scope for passing on the traditional skills and knowledge to the younger generation.

#### Gender Distribution

The survey indicated that most of the respondents (93.3%) were females, and this is in line with the pivotal role of women in Chendamangalam's handloom sector. The finding is an indication of the significance of empowering women and making them financially independent.

#### Educational Background

The majority of the respondents (56.7%) indicated having a high school level of education, followed by 30% of primary education level. The implication is the significance of interventions for enhancing education and skill development among handloom weavers.

#### Years of Experience

The survey indicated that most of the respondents (55.2%) had over 10 years of experience in the handloom industry, indicating high levels of experience and traditional know-how among weavers. The finding implies a need to maintain traditional know-how and skills in the industry.

#### **4.4 Objective 1: To evaluate the revitalization of handloom industry in Chendamangalam via Chekkutty dolls**

##### **1. Positive Impact of the Chekkutty Initiative on Handloom Industry Revival**

The findings indicate that an overwhelming majority (80%) of the respondents opine that the Chendamangalam handloom industry has seen a considerable revival after the floods, primarily because of efforts such as Chekkutty dolls. The program has been a key to revitalization through its provision of alternative sources of income for artisans as well as

encouraging public interaction with handloom products. The existence of neutral (13.3%) and negative (6.6%) responses, however, is an indication that there are still challenges in some areas requiring continued support and adjustment of recovery strategies.

## 2. Effectiveness of Government and Organizational Relief Efforts

Government relief measures were acknowledged by most respondents, with 66.6% agreeing that they contributed positively to the handloom sector's recovery. However, a notable proportion (30%) expressed neutrality, indicating possible gaps in awareness, communication, or access to relief efforts. Similarly, 60.7% of respondents reported receiving external assistance, yet the fact that 14.3% did not receive any, and 25% remained uncertain, suggests inefficiencies in the distribution or outreach of these programs.

## 3. Chekkutty Dolls' Role in Attracting Younger Consumers and school students.

A high 90% of the respondents confirmed that the Chekkutty dolls project effectively enhanced demand for traditional handloom products among younger consumers. This reflects the success of the project in filling the gap between generations in consumer interest. But 10% of the respondents were not sure, reflecting the necessity for further marketing and education efforts to maintain and increase this interest.

Chekkutty dolls, the symbol of resilience, have been taken up by school students all over the world in large numbers. The initiative has attracted much publicity across the world, with some schools in the United States also joining hands to make these dolls.

## 4. Innovation and Product Diversification Incentives

The survey results show that 60% of artisans launched new handloom products other than Chekkutty dolls, reflecting innovation motivation. Yet, 33.3% did not diversify because of a lack of resources or unwillingness, and 6.7% were undecided. These results reflect the necessity for improved financial and training assistance to promote ongoing innovation in the industry.

## 5. Revival of Financial and Structural Capital of the Handloom Industry

Most of the respondents (80%) accepted the fact that Chekkutty played a tremendous role in revitalizing the overall financial position as well as general revival of the handloom sector. Though 16.7% remained undecided and a smaller 6.7% didn't agree, the extremely strong positive response to this statement validates the economic revamp role that social entrepreneurship played.

#### 6.Maintenance of Traditional Weaving Techniques

The results indicate that flood-relief efforts, such as Chekkutty dolls, were an important factor in safeguarding conventional weaving practices. Most (75.9%) concurred that these efforts-maintained craftsmanship effectively, although 20.7% were neutral about it. This indicates that though relief efforts proved useful, targeted efforts might still be required for the long-term viability of weaving traditions.

#### 7.Handloom Sector's Enhanced Market Competitiveness

The survey indicates that 80% of the sample believed that there was an increase in market competitiveness of the handloom industry because of the Chekkutty initiative. The fact that there was no disagreement also supports the success of the project in placing handloom products more positively in the marketplace. But sustained efforts at branding and outreach would be necessary to maintain this momentum.

#### 8.Overall Acceptance of Post-Flood Rehabilitation Initiatives

Rehabilitation activities were well-organized and were widely accepted by 66.6% of the respondents agreeing on their positive effects. Still, the huge neutral response (33.3%) indicates that there should be further improvement in the implantation and visibility of these efforts.

#### 9.Significance of NGO and Government Collaboration

A large majority (96.6%) confirmed to have received assistance from NGOs and government agencies, emphasizing the value of concerted recovery efforts. Still, a small percentage was unsure, referring to possible gaps in outreach or recognition. Moreover, although 56.7%

evaluated government collaboration as positive, 26.7% were unsure, and 16.7% disagreed, reflecting the need for more transparent communication and improved partnership approaches.

#### 10. NGO Contributions to Industry Revival

NGO participation was greatly valued, with 96.4% of the participants acknowledging their contribution to the rejuvenation of the handloom industry. Only a small fraction remained indifferent or unhappy, indicating the scope for enhanced communication and monitoring of impact. Sustaining effective NGO coordination will be instrumental in perpetuating the success already made.

#### 11. Need for investment and innovation

Chekkutty dolls were originally successful, with an increase in revenue fueled by emotional support. Unfortunately, the innovation of Chekkutty dolls has not endured, resulting in a waning of interest and sales. Consequently, the number and range of Chekkutty dolls available have significantly declined over time. In addition, production rates have fallen sharply, although they are still listed on some online stores, reflecting the need for renewed investment and innovation to breathe life back into this distinctive product.

### **4.5 Objective 2: To assess the effectiveness of marketing strategies, particularly through the incorporation of Chekkutty dolls, in revitalizing the Handloom Industry in Chendamangalam**

#### 1. Dominance of Digital and Influencer Marketing

The results show that influencer marketing (86.7%) and digital marketing (80%) are the most effective marketing strategies in selling Chekkutty dolls and, consequently, in rejuvenating the handloom sector. This indicates that online activity, especially through social media, is key in influencing consumer attitudes and product exposure.

#### 2. Shift Away from Traditional Marketing

The low usage of trade exhibitions (6.7%) and email marketing (10%) is an indication of the decline in conventional promotional strategies. This may be because these strategies are

inefficient in targeting the younger generation, who are more active on the internet. The industry is instead using platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube for brand narration and customer interaction.

### 3. Youth Engagement as a Key Factor

With 66.7% of respondents being young consumers, it can be seen that marketing campaigns have to be framed to appeal to and retain the interest of young generations. Employing modern means of communication like short videos, engaging social media contests, and partnering with online influencers keeps one connected with young buyers.

### 4. Collaboration with Artists for Market Expansion

The 33.3% contribution in collaborative work with other artists signifies the role played by the collaborative work among artists in order to enhance the acceptability of handloom goods. Through interchanging handloom material with trendy designing styles using collaboration, new markets can be tapped and creative products can be made.

### 5. Requirement for Offline Interaction Strategies

As digital approaches rule the day, the over-reliance on web platforms may have downsides in terms of market saturation and algorithm dependence. Therefore, investigating offline marketing innovations like experiential stores, pop-up shows, and neighborhood events can provide an offset to web efforts and result in a well-rounded approach.

## **4.6 Objective 3: To examine the social and economic benefits gained by artisans in Chendamangalam through the revitalisation of the Handloom Industry through chekkutty dolls**

### 1. Pre-Chekkutty Economic Challenges

Prior to the introduction of Chekkutty dolls, most artisans in Chendamangalam were experiencing economic hardships as a result of the destructive floods. Survey information indicates that 41.4% of the respondents graded their economic status as "fair," and a mere 17.2% graded it as "good." This indicates that while some artisans were able to survive, many others were plagued by financial insecurity. The results highlight the imperative



necessity for livelihood interventions such as Chekkutty dolls to assist affected communities in restoring their financial stability.

## 2. Restoration of Livelihoods

The Chekkutty project was instrumental in regaining lost livelihoods, with 79.3% of respondents having concurred that doll-making aided them in the recapture of their source of income. This illustrates how social entrepreneurship can be used as an influential method of economic rehabilitation in areas ravaged by disasters. In addition to facilitating economic relief, the project also aided in building resilience, as artisans regained their confidence and purpose.

## 3. Skill Development and Training

Not only did the initiative generate employment but also skill-building among artisans. A whopping 67.9% of respondents were trained to make Chekkutty dolls, which imparted technical knowledge and confidence in them. This highlights the importance of formal training programs in enabling long-term economic empowerment, as they allow one to diversify skills and gain self-sufficiency.

## 4. Impact on Family Well-being

The economic gains of Chekkutty doll-making benefited artisans' families as well, with 56.7% of the participants confirming that the programme benefited their household well-being. Still, 36.7% were neutral, which indicates that although most families benefited, the degree of impact differed according to personal situations. This indicates that more interventions are necessary to optimize the economic gains to all artisans.

## 5. Stable Income and Economic Resilience

Handloom industry revival with Chekkutty dolls brought a reliable stream of income for most artisans. A massive 90% reported that income earned from making the dolls supported their ability to pay for necessities, showing that the initiative helped significantly in economic hardship. It shows how village-based entrepreneurial endeavors can lead to sustainable employment opportunities and economic well-being.

## 6. Gaps in Financial Support

Despite the success of the initiative, financial support was not equally distributed among artisans. While 53.3% of respondents received financial assistance or loans to revive their handloom businesses, 36.7% did not receive any form of financial aid. This indicates a gap in support systems, suggesting that certain artisans were left without the necessary resources to recover fully. Addressing this issue would require more inclusive financial policies to ensure equal access to assistance.

#### 7. Institutional Financial Aid Effectiveness

A noteworthy 83.3% of respondents accepted that institutional financial assistance was the key to their recovery. The implication is the critical need for organized financial intervention in relief work after disasters. Nevertheless, 16.7% were doubtful of the impact of financial aid, implying that improved communication and knowledge of existing support schemes is essential.

#### 8. Stakeholder Relations during Recovery

Relationships with buyers, suppliers, and other stakeholders impacted the recovery of the handloom business considerably, with 76.6% of respondents indicating a positive or very positive influence. This highlights how good business networks play a critical role in bringing about economic recovery in the wake of a disaster. Enhancement of these relationships through strategic collaborations and partnerships can further promote the resilience of the industry.

#### 9. Profitability from Chekkutty Dolls

The initiative proved to be financially beneficial, with 72.4% of respondents experiencing increased profits after overcoming the initial challenges posed by the flood. This suggests that Chekkutty dolls not only provided immediate financial relief but also contributed to long-term profitability for artisans. Continued investment in such initiatives could further enhance their economic impact.

#### 10. Impact of Marketing on Sales Growth

Marketing efforts were crucial in increasing the sales of handloom products, with 100% of the respondents confirming a positive effect. This indicates the success of focused marketing campaigns in raising product visibility and demand. The results indicate that continued promotional efforts are required to sustain consumer interest and market growth.

#### 11. Increase in Savings

Whereas 53.4% indicated an increase in savings as a result of having a stable income, 36.7% were neutral, and 10% disagreed. This suggests that although the program had brought financial stability, the level of savings differed among artisans. Household expenses, financial knowledge, and personal management of finances could have had an impact on savings behavior.

#### 12. Current availability

These upcycled handloom dolls were created from damaged handloom materials during the floods were first sold at ₹25 per doll, and more than 100,000 dolls were sold in five days. Chekkutty dolls are now easily accessible on many online platforms, such as Greeni, a path-breaking app that deals in green products. A pack of 20 Chekkutty dolls is available on Greeni for as low as ₹500, and shipping within India is available for ₹50.

### 4.7 **Recommendations**

- Although Chekkutty dolls have been an important source of alternative income, more efforts need to be made in providing long-term financial and resource support to artisans. Thus invest in research and innovation.
- Enhance awareness and access gaps for government and external relief schemes through enhanced outreach, focused communication, and transparent channels of delivery.
- Ensure continuance and growth of younger consumers' interest in handloom products, additional participatory campaigns, online marketing, and partnerships with schools must be organized worldwide to promote cultural exchange, creativity and community support.

- Extend financial support, training, and market linkage to artisans to encourage diversification beyond Chekkutty dolls and foster a wider array of handloom-based products.
- Enable increased access to credit, infrastructural upgradation, and eco-friendly business models to enhance the financial strength of the handloom industry.
- Create formalized training programs, documentation processes, and mentorship programs to help ensure the longevity of traditional weaving skills for generations to come.
- Pursue branding, innovation and digital marketing campaigns to raise the market profile of Chendamangalam handloom products and maintain post-revival momentum.
- Enhance transparency, efficiency, and monitoring of post-flood rehabilitation schemes to achieve long-term impact and greater acceptance among affected communities.
- Create transparent communication, accountability, and collaborative frameworks between NGOs and government agencies to maximize relief and prevent gaps in coverage.
- Implement periodic evaluation mechanisms to gauge the success of NGO interventions and enhance coordination for long-term industry development.
- Blending digital marketing with focused offline activity, like engaging workshops, can drive customer participation.
- Leverage the deep cultural narrative of Chendamangalam's handloom culture in influencer marketing can establish stronger emotional connections with customers.
- Creating campaigns that connect with young consumers' values and interests, such as sustainability and ethical fashion, can enhance long-term commitment.

- Create collaborations with contemporary designers and craftsmen might help create unique, in-demand product lines.
- Organizing local exhibitions and heritage walks may attract tourists and socially conscious consumers, driving sales over electronic access. These discoveries point to the fact that a community-endorsed yet digital-first promotional approach would work best to ensure the long-term sustainability of the handloom industry through promoting Chekkutty dolls

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This study has illustrated how the Chekkutty dolls came to be a symbol of the Chendamangalam handloom industry's resilience after the floods in Kerala in 2018. Artisans managed to social entrepreneurially embed new economic opportunities to support their craft and cultural identity.

The initiative empowered women weavers, promoted sustainability, and proved that upcycling traditional industries is possible. In addition, Chekkutty exemplifies how innovation, alongside support from the community, can aid in economic recovery.

Furthermore, Chekkutty's success strongly indicates that adaptability strategies and digital marketing play a role in the rejuvenation of traditional industries. Using these different approaches can help artisans to reach farther and make themselves sustainable over the long haul in a market that is constantly evolving.

All in all, the Chekkutty movement is an excellent example of how social entrepreneurship can work. It also exemplifies the fact that adversity can be turned into opportunity through creativity and collaboration.

## **5. QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **Study of Social Entrepreneurship and Economic Revitalization in Chendamangalam with Chekutty Dolls**

#### **Survey on the Handloom Industry in Chendamangalam**

**1. Gender:**

- a) Male
- b) Female

**2. Age:**

- a) 18-25
- b) 26-35
- c) 36-45
- d) 46-55
- e) Above 55

**3. Experience in the handloom industry:**

- a) Less than 1 year 1-5 years
- b) 5-10 years
- c) More than 10 years

**4. Level of Education:**

- a) Primary School High
- b) School Higher Secondary
- c) Bachelor's Degree
- d) Master's Degree

**5. Do you agree that the handloom industries in Chendamangalam have recovered well**

**since the floods?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Neutral Disagree
- c) Strongly Disagree

**6. Did you receive any government relief packages (financial assistance) or other assistance during the natural disaster?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) May be

**7. Did the government relief efforts effectively support the handloom industry after the floods?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**8. To what extent do you agree that the incorporation of Chekkutty dolls into the handloom industry has helped to increase demand for traditional handloom products among younger generations?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**9. Have you introduced any new designs or products other than Chekkutty dolls in the handloom industry?**

- a) Yes

- b) No
- c) May be

**10. Do you agree that flood-relief initiatives focused on preserving traditional weaving techniques?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**11. Did the introduction of Chekkutty dolls improve the supply chain for handloom products?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**12. Do you agree that the handloom industry's post-flood resilience has enhanced its competitiveness through Chekkutty dolls?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**13. Do you think post-flood rehabilitation efforts prioritized supporting handloom artisans?**

- a) Strongly Agree



- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**14. Did you receive any assistance or support from government agencies or NGOs (Non- Governmental Organizations) to revive your handloom business after the floods?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) May be

**15. Did the government effectively collaborate to revive the handloom industry after the floods?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) May be

**16. Did NGOs effectively collaborate to revive the handloom industry after the floods?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**17. What business strategies have you used to spread your handloom business? (Select all that apply)**

- a) Social Media Marketing Influencer Marketing Online Advertising Email Marketing
- b) Trade Shows Exhibitions like Biennale Involvement of Youth
- c) Collaboration with Other Artisans Networking Events

- d) Traditional Advertising Loyalty Programs Referral Marketing Content Marketing
- e) Others (Please specify)

**18. What was your economic condition during the flood, before making Chekkutty dolls?**

- a) Very Good
- b) Good
- c) Fair
- d) Poor
- e) Very Poor

**19. Do you agree that making Chekkutty dolls helped to recover lost livelihood?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree

**20. Did you receive training or skill development to make Chekkutty dolls?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) May be

**21. Did post-flood profits from making Chekkutty dolls improve your family's well-being?**

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree

e) Strongly Disagree

**22. Do you agree that community support during floods helped you cope with the crisis?**

a) Strongly Agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly Disagree

**23. Have you found a stable income-earning method after the handloom industry's revival through Chekkutty dolls?**

a) Strongly Agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly Disagree

**24. Did you receive any financial assistance or loans to support the recovery of your handloom business after the flood?**

a) Yes

b) No

c) May be

**25. How effective was the post-flood financial aid from the above-mentioned institutions?**

a) Very Effective

b) Effective

c) Not Sure

d) Less Effective

e) Not Effective

**26. How has the post-flood recovery of your handloom business been influenced by your relationships with suppliers, buyers, or other stakeholders?**

a) Very Positive

b) Positive

c) Neutral

d) Negative

e) Very Negative

**27. Did you experience any significant changes in your profit from making Chekkutty dolls after recovering from the initial hardships caused by the flood?**

a) Yes

b) No

**28. Did the sales of handloom products increase after post-flood marketing initiatives?**

a) Strongly Agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly Disagree

**29. Have your savings increased due to a stable income from handloom work?**

a) Strongly Agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly Disagree

**30. Do you believe that promoting Chendamangalam handloom products through tourism initiatives can further enhance the industry's growth?**

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

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